The Reception of Byzantium in European Culture since 1500

Edited by
Przemysław Marciniak
and Dion C. Smythe

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ROZWOJU HUMANISTYKI

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Introduction

Przemysław Marciniak[1] and Dion C. Smythe[2]

Analyses of the reception of the classical tradition have recently become an indispensable part of classical studies. Understanding the importance of ancient civilization means also studying how it was used and abused in later times. Students of the classical tradition research the influence of ancient literature, its use in political discourse, and its manifestations in films, TV series, graphic novels and computer games. A recent flood of publications, including companions, handbooks and dictionaries, now addresses these issues.[3]

The Eastern Roman Empire, however, has not been so lucky. For a long time it was described as a 'lost empire' and remained largely ignored and misunderstood.[4] Its history was replaced by a series of stereotypes. To some extent this is understandable: the Byzantine tradition was cultivated primarily in those countries that either used to be a part of the Byzantine Empire or had close relations with it. This does not mean, however, that Byzantium always enjoyed popularity in the *Slavia Orthodoxa*. Resentment against Byzantium seems to have always been a part of the Byzantine heritage, as demonstrated, for example, by trends in its Russian and Bulgarian reception.[5] In the Western European tradition, Byzantium was reduced to a vague and indeterminate space full of exoticism, gold, icons, eunuchs and degenerate, murderous rulers.[6]

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[1] University of Silesia, Katowice.

[2] Queen's University, Belfast.

[3] See among many *A Companion to Classical Receptions*, ed. L. Hardwick and C. Stray (Oxford, 2008); *Classics and the Uses of Reception*, ed. C. Martindale and R. F. Thomas (Oxford, 2006); *Classical Myth and Culture in the Cinema*, ed. M. M. Winkler (Oxford, 2001).

[4] Such was the title of the Discovery Channel documentary series *Byzantium: The Lost Empire* (1997). See also A. Cameron, 'The absence of Byzantium', *Nea Hestia* 163 (2008), 4–59 and recently A. Cameron, 'Absence', *Byzantine Matters* (Princeton and Oxford, 2014).

[5] See Sergey Ivanov's and Vesselina Vachkova's contributions in this volume.

[6] Christiane Mervaud, *Voltaire en toutes lettres* (Paris, 1991), 108: 'L'histoire de Constantinople aux VIII[e] et IX[e] siècles se réduit à une enumeration de crimes qui prefigure celle des rois morts de mort violante dans "Candide"'. See also T. Palágyi, '"Une suite ininterrompue de meurtres, de parjures et de déclamations": Voltaire et les Byzantins', in

In modern culture, Byzantium is most commonly associated with the word 'Byzantine' – we hear about 'Byzantine administration', 'Byzantine politics' and 'Byzantine luxury'. Though the word may have slightly different meanings in every language, almost all such uses are pejorative. Yet, during its long existence, the Eastern Roman Empire was never called 'Byzantium'. Since they were heirs to the Roman Empire and to Greco-Roman culture, the people we now call *Byzantines* were to themselves just *Romans*. Until the nineteenth century, the Eastern Empire was considered a natural continuation of the Roman Empire, though one that had grown degenerate over the course of centuries. When Nicolaus Copernicus translated the letters of Theophilactus of Simocatta into Latin, he treated him like any other Greek author.[7] For Montesquieu, it was obvious to include the fate of the Eastern Empire (*l'Empire d'Orient*) in his *Considerations on the Causes of the Grandeur and Decadence of the Romans* (1734).[8]

Among the first people to use the term *Byzantine* to describe a political phenomenon beginning in the fourth century was Hieronymus Wolf (1516–1580). The edition of Byzantine writers he prepared in 1562 was called *Corpus Byzantinae Historiae*.[9] It is difficult to say when the Eastern Empire became Byzantium for good. One possible candidate for popularizing this term is the 'Patriarch of the Byzantinists', Charles DuCange, whose history of Byzantium, published in 1680, was titled *Historia Byzantina*.[10] Yet, according to the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française*, the adjective 'byzantin' is used in French to describe the Eastern Empire only from the eighteenth century onwards. By the time Gibbon was writing his history, the word 'Byzantine' in English might have been widely accepted.[11] One of the first recorded uses

Cultivateur de son jardin, Mélanges offerts à Monsieur le Professeur Imre Vörös, special issue of the *Revues d'études françaises* (Budapest, 2006), 155.

[7] T. Conley, *Byzantine Culture in Renaissance and Baroque Poland* (Warsaw, 1994), 78.

[8] Modern students of Montesquieu see in this text an endeavour to answer the question of why a decadent and despotic state managed to survive for such a long time: see C. Volpilhac-Auger, 'Ex oriente nox? Le paradoxe byzantin chez Montesquieu', *Dix-huitième siècle* 35 (2003), 393–404.

[9] On Wolf as the editor of the texts, see D. R. Reinsch's contribution in this volume.

[10] On DuCange as 'the Patriarch' see S. Menardos, *The Value of Byzantine and Modern Greek in Hellenic Studies: An Inaugural Lecture Delivered before the University. Thursday, October 29, 1908* (Oxford, 1909), 8. On DuCange and the term Byzantine, see R. Argyropoulos, *Les intellectuels grecs à la recherche de Byzance (1860–1912)* (Athens, 2001), 30.

[11] According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* the term 'Bizantine' (*sic*) to describe the Eastern Roman Empire was already used in English in 1693.

of this term in Modern Greek comes from 1803, when it was employed by Adamantios Korais.[12] In the nineteenth century, the word 'Byzantium' and its derivatives came to signify, with very few exceptions, various negative features of the empire – overgrown bureaucracy, pompous behaviour, luxury, cunning and deceptiveness.[13] The notion of a degenerate and corrupt Byzantium was present in almost all European languages regardless of their prior relationship with the empire. Echoing Montesquieu's statement about the madness of Byzantine theological disputes, Napoleon declared on 9 June 1815, 'Let us not follow the example of the Late Empire, which pressed from all sides by the barbarians, made itself a laughing stock for posterity by being occupied with abstract discussions while the city gates were being rammed'.[14] For Napoleon, Byzantine civilization had become the embodiment of decay and failure. When Theodore Roosevelt described President Woodrow Wilson's Congressional address as 'worthy of a Byzantine logothete', he drew on the idea of Byzantium as an over-bureaucratized, sclerotic state. This idea of a subtle, complicated, completely useless discussion reverberates in the very modern computer-related expression 'Byzantine fault', which describes a situation when the system has a malfunction but, rather than shutting down completely, continues instead to send false signals.[15]

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[12] P. Mackridge, 'Byzantium and the Greek language question in the nineteenth century', in D. Ricks and P. Magdalino, eds, *Byzantium and the Modern Greek Identity* (London, 1998), 49.

[13] R. Aerts, 'Dull gold and gory purple: images of Byzantium', in E. R. Smits and M. M. Woesthuis, eds, *Polyphonia Byzantina: Studies in Honour of Willem J. Aerts* (Groningen, 1990), 312.

[14] 'N'imitons pas l'exemple du Bas-Empire, qui, pressé de tous côtés par les Barbares, se rendit la risée de la postérité en s'occupant de discussions abstraites au moment où le bélier brisait les portes de la ville'. The term 'le Bas-Empire' to describe the last period of the existence of the Roman Empire until the Fall of Constantinople entered French historiography in 1752 with the publication of *Histoire du Bas-Empire* by Charles Le Beau. See also *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française*, s.v. *byzantin*: '2. Expr. Figure et péj. Querelle, discussion byzantine, d'une subtilité excessive et sans intérêt réel, par allusion aux controverses grammaticales ou théologiques des derniers temps de l'empire de Byzance'. Montesquieu's statement: 'La fureur des disputes devint un état si naturel aux Grecs, que lorsque Cantacuzen prit Constantinople il trouva l'empereur Jean et l'impératrice Anne occupés à un concile contre quelques ennemis des moines: et quand Mahomet II l'assiégea, il ne put suspendre les haines théologiques; et on y était plus occupé du concile de Florence que de l'armé des Turcs', C. de Secondat Montesquieu, *Considérations sur les causes de la grandeur des Romains …* (Paris, 1830), 213.

[15] M. Pease, R. Shostak and L. Lamport, 'Reaching agreement in the presence of faults', *Journal of the ACM* 27:2 (1980), 228–34, for the introduction of the concept and the terminology.

This over-simplified representation of a Byzantine Empire in constant and continuous decline was created during the Enlightenment and reinforced by the authority of authors such as Montesquieu, Voltaire and Edward Gibbon.[16] This unholy trinity is to a large extent responsible for creating this vision of Byzantium, a vision that persisted as an intellectual paradigm for years to come. Although it would be simply unfair to equate the works of Voltaire and Montesquieu and Gibbon and their aims, their enormous influence on subsequent generations contributed to the creation of a grim and decadent image of Byzantine culture. Their attitude towards Byzantium, however, was a complicated mix of repugnance and fascination. Both Montesquieu and Gibbon devoted a good deal of their writings to the decadent Empire, while Voltaire's tragedy *Irène* (1778) was set in Constantinople during the Komnenian coup d'état.[17] Though Voltaire despised Byzantine religiosity, he sympathized with the Byzantine antipathy towards Rome and the papacy.[18]

Much has been written about the main culprit Gibbon and his *Fall and Decline of the Roman Empire*.[19] As has been pointed out by David Womersley, Gibbon was fascinated by Byzantium; fascination, however, does not exclude disgust.[20] According to Panagiotis Agapitos, Gibbon's idea was to present Byzantium as an organism undergoing a millennium of long

[16] For the historiography of Byzantine history before the Age of Reason see A. Pertusi, *Storiografia umanistica e mondo bizantino* (Palermo, 1967).

[17] The *Alexiad* was already known and read in France in the seventeenth century; see, for example, Madame de Sévigné, *Correspondance* I–III, Texte établi, présenté et annoté par Roger Duchêne avec la collaboration de Jacqueline Duchêne pour l'établissement de l'index (Paris, 1974–1978), letter 600, 526 (1677): 'Nous lisons une histoire des empereurs d'Orient écrite par une jeune princesse, fille de l'empereur Alexis'.

[18] Palágyi, '"Une suite ininterrompue de meurtres, de parjures et de déclamations"', 169–70: 'L'hostilité foncière de Voltaire à l'idée de Croisade le pousse à reconnaître à l'Empire grec la qualité d'opposant utile. Byzance "se sauve" donc ici grace à son antagonism religieux avec l'Occident'.

[19] See, for instance, P. B. Craddock, *Edward Gibbon: Luminous Historian* (Baltimore, 1989); for thorough analyses of Gibbon's treatment of various periods of imperial history, see R. McKitterick and R. Quinault, eds, *Edward Gibbon and Empire* (New York and Cambridge, 1997).

[20] D. Womersley, 'Taking a leaf from Gibbon', *Dialogos: Hellenic Studies Review* 6 (1999), 155. This observation is well supported by Gibbon himself – he wrote in a letter to Lord Hardwick: 'Your Lordship's observation is undoubtedly just that Byzantine history becomes less interesting *after* the interruption of the Arabs; but our curiosity is again excited by the Crusades and the Turks, and in the intermediate period, I shall measure, not so much the length of time as dullness of matter'. *The Letters of Edward Gibbon*, ed. J. E. Norton, vol. II, Letters 237–618 (London, 1956), letter no. 518.

decline, thus transforming the Byzantine State into a medieval version of the Ottoman Empire:

> This point of view, an immediate result of orientalism and nationalism, helped Western Europeans to place the origins of the European states in the Latin Middle Ages [...] and also to claim the heritage of ancient Greece civilization through Rome and the Renaissance.[21]

Anthony Bryer concluded that the sixth volume of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* (i.e. from chapter 58, the First Crusade, onwards) was ignored rather than abused, before the publication of Bury's edition (1896–1914). Regardless of whether Gibbon truly contributed to the abandonment of the study of Byzantium or whether his influence was largely mythologized, his work nevertheless entered the popular imagination.[22] The views of the Enlightenment writers were repeated and reinforced in the nineteenth century. Even Friedrich Hegel in his *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte* [*Lectures on the Philosophy of History*] succumbed to the vision of the history of an empire full of the coups d'état, poisoned emperors and courtly intrigue.[23] However, the nineteenth century also saw the rise of Byzantine Studies as an academic discipline. The combined efforts of George Finlay, John Bagnell Bury and Karl Krumbacher launched a gradual appreciation of the Eastern Empire. However important their work was, the true battle for Byzantium was fought not in university classrooms but in popular works – novels and plays that were able to influence popular imagination. Charles Diehl, an eminent Byzantinist, wrote that Victorien Sardou, Sarah Bernhardt (the author of

[21] P. Agapitos, 'Byzantine literature and Greek philologists in the nineteenth century', *Classica et Medievalia. Revue danoise de philologie et d'histoire* 43 (1992), 238.

[22] A. Bryer, 'Gibbon and the Later Byzantine Empires', in McKitterick and Quinault, *Edward Gibbon and Empire*, 115. Traces of the reading of the *Fall and Decline* are clearly visible in J. Baillie, 'Constantine Paleologus or the Last of the Ceasars', in J. Baillie, *Miscellaneous Plays*, with an introduction for the Garland edition by D. H. Reiman (New York and London, 1977), especially XIV – where she lists Gibbon's book as the main source of her inspiration; the *Fall and Decline* is often quoted and referred to in Felicia Hermans's *The Last Constantine*, see F. D. Hermans, 'The Last Constantine', in Felicia Hermans, *The Siege of Valencia*, with an introduction for the Garland edition by D. H. Reiman (London and New York, 1978), notes on pages 59, 60, 62, 63, 64. See also the introduction to the poem *The Fall of Constantinople* by David Douglas, *The Fall of Constantinople*: *A Poem* (London, 1823), vol. III, V.

[23] G. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte* (Stuttgart, 1961), 467. See also R. Nelson, 'Living on the Byzantine Borders of the Western Art', *Gesta* 35:1 (1996), 8.

the once-famous drama *Theodora* and the actress who played the title role) and Jules Massenet (the composer of the 'Byzantine' opera *Esclarmonde*) did more for Byzantium than many academic books.[24] The *byzantomania*, which was sweeping France when Diehl wrote his article, was indeed both a blessing and a curse for the newly emergent field of Byzantine Studies. French and Italian writers were interested in exactly those aspects of Byzantine culture that Byzantinists wanted to downplay and rectify – its supposed decadence, grandeur and intrigue. That is why scholars reviewing Jean Lombard's *Byzance* and Paul Adam's *Basile et Sophie* found them irritatingly wrong.[25] The chasm between academic and popular writers has only recently been bridged with the publication of novels about Byzantium authored by highly regarded Byzantine scholars such as Panagiotis Agapitos, a professor of Byzantine literature and culture in Cyprus, and Harry Turtledove, a science-fiction author with a PhD in Byzantine History.

As the popularity of Agapitos's and Turtledove's novels suggests, the popular vision of Byzantium in many Western countries is shaped to a large extent by its representations in novels, graphic novels and films rather than by academic books. The latter, however, have had a not insignificant impact – the works of Steven Runciman and John Julius Norwich have undoubtedly helped popularize the subject.

It is also telling that there has never been a Byzantine blockbuster – although the first film inspired by Byzantine history was the short (2'56) French film *Les Torches Humaines* (*Justinian's Human Torches*), directed by Georges Méliès, a director famous for not being terribly fussy about historical details.[26] A recent production *Fetih 1453*, tells the story of the Fall of Constantinople from the Turkish perspective, offering a naïve narrative of conquest that evidently should be seen as a part of a reborn Neo-Ottomanism.[27] Yet, to quote the interview with renowned fantasy writer Tom Holt, the story of the Byzantine

[24] Charles Diehl, 'Les études byzantines en France', *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 9 (1900), 11–12. Diehl's own attitude towards Sardou's play was much more complex and not that benevolent after all.

[25] T. Zichy, 'Jean Lombard: Byzance' [review], *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 11 (1902), 202 and K. Krumbacher, 'Paul Adam: Basile et Sophie' [review], *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 10 (1901), 664–5.

[26] On Byzantium in films see P. Marciniak, 'And the Oscar goes to... the Emperor!', in I. Nilsson and P. Stephenson, eds, *Wanted: Byzantium. The Desire for a Lost Empire* (Uppsala, 2014), 247–55.

[27] On Byzantium in Turkish films, see B. Kitapçı Bayrı, 'Contemporary perception of Byzantium in Turkish cinema: the cross-examination of Battal Gazi films with the *Battalname*', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 37:1 (2013), 81–91.

Empire 'is more enthralling and richer in extraordinary characters than any novel. If I was a screenwriter, I'd love to write a film script about the Fall of Constantinople in 1453, and another one about Michael IV. Both of those stories are crying out for someone like Ridley Scott to put them on the screen'.[28]

This lack of interest is to be explained by the fact that Byzantium does not feature prominently in Western school curricula, though a preliminary survey by Stefan Albrecht shows that students in France, Great Britain and Germany have the opportunity to learn about landmarks in Byzantine history (such as Justinian's civil code) as well as about Byzantine culture.[29] Small wonder, then, that Byzantium plays a much more prominent role in Greek education. As for the East, for example in Polish schools, Byzantium is discussed mostly when its history intersects with other historical events more important from the Polish point of view (e.g. the Great Schism of 1054) or recognized as universally significant (such as the Fall of Constantinople as the end of Middle Ages).[30] Such fragmentary education results in creating a fragmentary vision of Byzantium that cannot compete with the fuller narrative of the histories of Antiquity or the Western Middle Ages.

It would not be true, however, to say that the reception of Byzantium is a completely understudied issue. Some of its aspects, such as the Greek reception of Byzantine culture, are well researched.[31] Similarly, the French *byzantomania* at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries met with relatively high interest from scholars. However, only a few books have been published that directly address questions of the reception of Byzantine culture.[32]

The main focus of the present volume is on those aspects of Byzantine reception that are less known to English-reading audiences, which accounts

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[28] T. Holt, 'Piszę to, co ludzie chcą czytać' ['I write what people want to read'], *Nowa Fantastyka* 9:348 (2011), 65.

[29] S. Albrecht, 'Byzanz in deutschen, französichen und englischen Schulbüchern', in A. Helmedach, ed., *Pulverfass, Powder Keg, Baril de Poudre? Südosteuropa im europäischen Geschichtsschulbuch* (Hannover, 2007), 11–40. On the place of Byzantium in Turkish school curriculum see K. Durak, 'The representation of Byzantine history in high school textbooks in Turkey', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 38:2 (2014), 245–64.

[30] For a Greek perspective see T. Kolias, 'Byzance dans les manuels d'histoire grecs', in M.-F. Auzépy, ed., *Byzance en Europe* (Paris, 2003), 61–9.

[31] Suffice it to mention *Byzantium and the Modern Greek Identity*, ed. Ricks and Magdalino.

[32] See for instance Auzépy, *Byzance en Europe* and more recently *Byzanzrezeption in Europa: Spurensuche über das Mittelalter und die Renaissance bis in die Gegenwart*, ed. F. Kolovou (Berlin and New York, 2012) and *Byzantium/Modernism. The Byzantine as Method in Modernity*, ed. R. Betancourt, M. Taroutina (Leiden and Boston, 2015).

for the inclusion of Bulgarian, Czech, Polish and Russian perspectives. Four contributions focus on the nineteenth- and twentieth-century reception of Byzantine culture in these Slavonic countries, each of which mediated this inheritance in culturally specific ways very much dependent on their own relationships with the Eastern Empire. Those countries that were part of the Byzantine Empire had a different attitude towards it than, for instance, Poland, where Byzantium was equated with Russian invaders. This volume tackles also more general issues concerning the reception of Byzantine culture as it opens with Helena Bodin's survey defining 'Byzantinism' and how it was understood in different countries. Diether Reinsch presents the philological methods of the father of Byzantine Studies, Hieronymus Wolf, the editor and translator of the texts of Byzantine historians. Ingela Nilsson surveys the translations (or rather adaptations) of Byzantine novel *Hysmine and Hysminias* in eighteenth-century France, the topic especially fascinating since the work on early modern translations and adaptations of Byzantine literary texts is almost non-existent in modern scholarship. Byzantine culture as reflected in Modernist texts is the topic of Adam Goldwyn's contribution. The volume includes articles that discuss the use of Byzantine elements in art history (Albrecht Berger, Tonje Sørensen and Helen Rufus-Ward) as well as Dion Smythe's article, which looks at Byzantium in opera.

We have decided to organize the text thematically rather than chronologically; this appears to be a better way of showing how certain ideas, be it in literature or in art history, were used throughout centuries. We hope that this volume will contribute to the ever-growing debate on the role of the Byzantine Empire in early modern and modern culture.

PART I
Uses of Byzantium

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Chapter 1

Whose Byzantinism – Ours or Theirs? On the Issue of Byzantinism from a Cultural Semiotic Perspective

Helena Bodin

Modern European culture has shown a far-reaching engagement with Byzantium, the meaning of being Byzantine and the issue of Byzantinism. Writers have declared their preoccupation with Byzantium,[1] while certain critics and intellectuals have come out as dedicated Byzantines.[2] Byzantine qualities and Byzantinism have been characterised as neither Eastern nor Western,[3] or – on the contrary – as being both Western and Eastern.[4] Meanwhile 'Byzantinisms' signify conventionally lengthy, sophisticated and obscure discussions but may also in particular cases denote a positive aspect of the art of speaking indirectly.[5] Though these various uses of Byzantium and its derivatives are unclear and often contradictory, a common denominator seems

[1] The Modern Greek poet Giorgos Seferis in a letter to G. C. Katsimbalis, quoted in Roderick Beaton, '"Our glorious Byzantinism": Papatzonis, Seferis, and the Rehabilitation of Byzantium in Postwar Greek Poetry', in D. Ricks and P. Magdalino, eds, *Byzantium and the Modern Greek Identity*, Centre for Hellenic Studies, King's College London, Publications 4 (London, 1998), 134–5.

[2] The British museum curator Matthew Prichard in a letter to the art collector Isabella Stewart Gardner in 1909, 'In any case I am still an out and out Byzantine!', quoted in R. Labrusse, 'Byzance et l'art moderne. La référence byzantine dans les cercles artistiques d'avant-garde au début du XXe siècle', in J.-M. Spieser, ed., *Présence de Byzance* (Paris, 2007), 165, note 78. For Julien Benda as a Byzantine, see below.

[3] R. Byron, *The Byzantine Achievement: An Historical Perspective, A.D. 330–1435* (London, 1987 [1929]).

[4] H. Ruin, 'Medelhavet inom oss', *Det sjunkna hornet* (Stockholm, 1956), 133.

[5] For '*byzantinismes*' in French as a positive means of the art of speaking indirectly, see J. Kristeva, *Meurtre à Byzance. Roman* (Paris, 2004), 121, and further H. Bodin, 'Seeking Byzantium on the borders of narration, identity, space and time in Julia Kristeva's novel *Murder in Byzantium*', *Nordlit* 24 (2009), 31–43.

to be that Byzantium functions within modern and postmodern culture as a point of departure for assaults on the present.[6]

Studies of the reception of Byzantium in various epochs and cultural contexts are today an established branch of Byzantine Studies, and their results show the richness and complexity of the impact of the Byzantine legacy on later times.[7] The premises of these studies are reflected, however, in the way in which the many different receptions of Byzantium are designated: are they described as Byzantine motifs or Byzantine influences, as references to Byzantium, as representations of Byzantium, or are they a matter of appropriation? These choices are not innocent but raise questions about how Byzantium is conceived. Does a certain study assume a historically defined Byzantium, confined within a particular time and space, or does it observe all kinds of uses of Byzantium and Byzantine epithets, however biased and coloured they might be by new and further new contexts? A special line of inquiry within this field comprises studies of the enigmatic and challenging notion of Byzantinism and its historical, geographical and cultural dissemination, and so these questions are also vital to the issue of Byzantinism.

The notion of Byzantinism would seem to encompass that broad range of meanings and topics that an '-ism' might imply: it can signify a political vision, sometimes with nationalistic or imperialistic gestures, like other ideological '-isms', such as feminism, liberalism, Marxism, cæsaropapism or terrorism, or their postcolonial cousin, Orientalism. It can also signify exaggerations of various kinds within the domains of rhetoric, bureaucracy or luxury, like '-isms' that label a particular form of human behaviour, for example consumerism or populism. Furthermore, it can describe certain aesthetic and cultural characteristics, as for example in architecture, art and music, like '-isms' that have broad artistic and cultural historical aims, such as naturalism, modernism or humanism. Byzantinisms, often appearing in the plural, can be a term used in comparative linguistics to describe certain expressions in Medieval Latin,

[6] The Modern Swedish poet Gunnar Ekelöf in a working note, 'I have chosen Byzantium, lost long ago, as a point of departure from which I would be able to assail the present', quoted from H. Bodin, 'Byzantine Literature for Europe? From Karelia to Istanbul with the Swedish Modernist Poet Gunnar Ekelöf', in T. D'haen and I. Goerlandt, eds, *Literature for Europe?* Textxet, Studies in Comparative Literature 61 (Amsterdam and New York, 2009), 363.

[7] Compare the list of functions of the reception of Byzantium in Modern European literature – reinterpretation, revocation, prefiguration, incrustation – proposed by P. Marciniak, *Ikona dekadencji. Wybrane problemy europejskiej recepcji Bizancjum od XVII do XX wieku* [*The Icon of Decadence. Selected Problems of the European Reception of Byzantium Between the Seventeenth and Twentieth Centuries*] (Katowice, 2009), 181–2.

Modern Greek and Slavic languages.[8] It can also be used to articulate the supposed essence of Byzantium, and in this case, slightly different components and criteria are emphasised from one age to another. The notion of Byzantinism appears as the 'floating signifier' of semiotics and discourse analysis, able to take on whatever meaning and values a certain speaker or scholar requires.

The aim of this chapter is therefore to study the meanings and functions of Byzantinism from a cultural semiotic perspective. Is Byzantium conceived as a central or a peripheral cultural phenomenon, and how do these different conceptions affect the use, function and meaning of the notion of Byzantinism? The analyses are based on the Russian–Estonian literary scholar Yuri Lotman's cultural semiotic theory and the idea of the semiosphere, i.e. the semiotic space that makes linguistic communication possible. It is combined with the Israeli literary scholar and semiotician Itamar Even-Zohar's method of studying cultural polysystems, focussing on literature and issues of translation.

A similar approach, though not from an explicitly cultural semiotic perspective, can be found in more general studies on the reception of Byzantium, such as Averil Cameron's seminal essay 'The Use & Abuse of Byzantium'.[9] A valuable anthology exploring a Byzantine cultural centre and its peripheries mainly from a historical perspective, together with issues of identity, was edited by Paolo Odorico.[10] Close connections are also evident with studies of other '-isms' or aspects of them, for example Hellenism and Modernism, such as Artemis Leontis's *Topographies of Hellenism* (1995), as well as recent studies on issues of identity, such as Anthony Kaldellis's *Hellenism in Byzantium* (2007).[11] But for now these works will be left aside

[8] A thought-provoking example is the poem 'Latynka' ['The Roman Alphabet'], by the Ukrainian writer Andriy Bondar, published in Ukrainian, written in the Roman alphabet, in *Prymityvni formy vlasnosti* (L'viv, 2004): 'one of my friends thinks / that if we switch to the roman alphabet / our people will steal less / and immediately / our messy byzantinisms / our obnoxious sovietisms / our endless ugro-finnisms / (sorry Ugrics, sorry Finns) / will disappear and something will snap in our heads / – and "voilà!" we are part of Europe' (trans. V. Tkacz and W. Phipps), at http://poetryinternationalweb.net/pi/site/poem/item/5552 (last accessed 25 September 2014).

[9] Averil Cameron, 'The Use & Abuse of Byzantium: An Essay on Reception. An Inaugural Lecture', *Changing Cultures in Early Byzantium*, Variorum reprints, Collected studies series 536 (Aldershot, 1996), XIII, 2–31. See also Averil Cameron, 'The absence of Byzantium', *Nea Hestia* (2008), 4–58.

[10] *Byzantina–metabyzantina. La périphérie dans le temps et l'espace. Actes de la 6. séance plénière*, Dossiers byzantins 2, ed. P. Odorico (Paris, 2003).

[11] A. Leontis, *Topographies of Hellenism: Mapping the Homeland* (Ithaca, NY, 1995); A. Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium: The Transformations of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition* (Cambridge, 2007).

so that this chapter can focus more precisely on the notion of Byzantinism itself. My aim is to consider examples from modern times, and to discuss often unstable and ambiguous relations to norms and cultural centres, rather than to consider preconceived identities. The focus of this chapter will therefore be dynamic situations rather than stable positions.

To this end, some cases regarding the use of the phrase 'our Byzantinism' from the late nineteenth- and the early twentieth century will be discussed. This idea was originally articulated in Russian by the intellectual and later Orthodox Christian monk Konstantin Leontiev, in French in an avant-garde context by the writers Paul Radiot and Jean Schopfer and the famous intellectual Julien Benda, and in Modern Greek by the modernist poet Constantine Cavafy, living in Alexandria. With regard to Cavafy's use of the phrase 'our Byzantinism', a large number of interpretations and translations of his poem 'Στην Εκκλησία' ['In the Church'] will be discussed as cases of transfer between different cultural systems. The chosen texts span a wide range of text types and represent essays, polemical articles, poetry and literary translations together with their commentaries, as well as literary criticism and analyses. The latter-mentioned will be studied in this case on a meta-level.

But first, an introduction is required to the cultural semiotic theories and methods of Lotman and Even-Zohar, together with a mapping of the Western and Byzantine semiospheres, as well as a short survey of earlier studies on the notion of Byzantinism from a cultural semiotic perspective.

Cultural Centres and Peripheries

According to Yuri Lotman's theory and concept of the semiosphere, presented in *Universe of the Mind* (1990), there cannot be any *semiosis* at all outside the semiosphere, which provides both the condition and result of the development of a culture. The relation between the centre and periphery of a semiosphere, as well as the relation between different semiospheres, is characterised by dynamic and dialogic conditions, in the sense that they are mutable, shifting and interchanging.[12] Lotman bases his cultural theory on a binary model, deriving from the difference between the own and the alien. The boundary of the semiosphere is marked by the use of the first person – by saying 'I', 'we', 'my', 'our'. Inside the boundary is everything we call 'ours' or 'my own'; there

[12] Yu. M. Lotman, 'Semiotic Space', *Universe of the Mind: A Semiotic Theory of Culture*, trans. Ann Shukman (London and New York, 1990), 123–30.

is a feeling of safety and of a culture regarded as being in order. Outside are 'they' and 'the others', phenomena regarded as hostile and dangerous, and a culture viewed as confused and chaotic, thus not really worth consideration as a culture.[13]

Itamar Even-Zohar's method of studying cultural polysystems, presented in *Papers in Culture Research* (2005; 2010) and in his earlier *Polysystem Studies* (1990),[14] has much in common with Lotman's cultural semiotic perspective and his concept of the semiosphere. According to Even-Zohar, a system is a network of relationships, rather than a conglomerate of various single elements. A cultural polysystem is thus a multiple system, a system of systems, comprising more than one cultural centre and several peripheries.[15] Like Lotman's semiosphere it is characterised as open, dynamic and heterogeneous. It follows that any cultural phenomenon and artefact can be used and evaluated in different ways, depending on which cultural centre it is related to. It might be regarded as central, worthy of cultural interest and canon-founding, or – on the contrary – as peripheral, uninteresting and incomprehensible. A basic premise of Even-Zohar's polysystem theory is that a periphery is always judged according to the norms of the centre.[16] At the core of Even-Zohar's work are translation studies, as well as his illuminating discussions of possible interferences and transfers between cultural systems.[17]

Because of the basic similarities between Lotman's and Even-Zohar's cultural semiotic views, no distinction between the notion of semiosphere and the notion of a cultural system will be made in this chapter. They share the important point that linguistic meanings are the result of dynamic relations between the norms of cultural centres and their peripheries, of never-ending negotiations between 'us' and 'them', between perceptions of the high value of the own and perceptions of a worthless and chaotic otherness. As Lotman puts it, boundaries of semiospheres do not function like limiting borderlines but as filtering membranes, transforming external phenomena into internal ones. These boundaries can be compared to mechanisms for translating activities, as

[13] Lotman, 'The Notion of Boundary', *Universe of the Mind*, 131–42.

[14] I. Even-Zohar, *Polysystem Studies*, *Poetics Today: International Journal for Theory and Analysis of Literature and Communication* 11 (1990), 1; I. Even-Zohar, *Papers in Culture Research* (2010 [2005]), at http://www.tau.ac.il/~itamarez/works/books/index.html (last accessed 25 September 2014).

[15] Even-Zohar, 'Polysystem Theory and Culture Research', *Papers in Culture Research*, 35–9. For the definition of polysystem, see Even-Zohar, *Polysystem Studies*, 88.

[16] Even-Zohar, 'Polysystem Theory (Revised)', *Papers in Culture Research*, 40–50.

[17] Even-Zohar, *Polysystem Studies*, 45–94; Even-Zohar, 'Laws of Cultural Interference', *Papers in Culture Research*, 52–69.

they are basically ambivalent. They simultaneously separate and unite because they belong to both cultures, as they meet and interfere in their peripheries, in their border zones.[18] According to Even-Zohar, whose method provides the more precise analytic tools and terms, we should pay attention not only to translation between languages within a single cultural system but also to another kind of translation: transfers between different cultural systems.

Byzantinism in Different Semiospheres

Within Europe, understood in an extremely broad sense as including all parts of the former Byzantine Empire and the later so-called Byzantine Commonwealth, there are regions, such as Greece and Russia, that count themselves as heirs of Byzantium and still relate to a Byzantine cultural centre. Other regions, such as France and Germany, are not related at all to Byzantium by way of genealogy. These circumstances form the premises of this study, whereby two different semiotic spheres, a Byzantine and a Western semiosphere, interacting and interfering within a larger cultural polysystem, are established.

The cultural centre of the Byzantine semiosphere is the capital of the former empire, Constantinople. Since it is the seat of the Ecumenical Patriarch of the Orthodox Church, it still holds a unique position by virtue of this name, although it is known nowadays by the name of Istanbul according to official Turkish custom. The cultural centre of the Western semiosphere is likewise undisputed. Ever since the beginning of modern times, Paris has functioned as its normative centre where cultural values are created and judged, as has been showed by Pascale Casanova in her important *The World Republic of Letters* (2004).[19] It follows that Byzantium can be conceived as either peripheral, with regard to the norms and values of the Western semiosphere, or central within the Byzantine semiosphere, promoting other norms and values. As I have shown in my recent monograph on the uses of Byzantium within Swedophone literature and culture in the mid-twentieth century, it was decisive for how Byzantium was represented as to whether it was judged to be a peripheral phenomenon or recognised as a cultural system of its own. Another important factor was whether the Orthodox Christian tradition was acknowledged as a

[18] Lotman, 'The Notion of Boundary', 131–42.

[19] P. Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters*, trans. M. B. DeBevoise (Cambridge, MA, 2004).

legitimate source of knowledge.[20] Especially interesting are those geographical areas and situations where semiospheres overlap, and where different views and values interfere and confront each other.[21]

It is well known, that the name Byzantium (denoting the empire, not the city) is an early modern, Western European coinage, dating back to the middle of the sixteenth century.[22] It can be described as a *retronym*, a kind of neologism, naming an old and lost world in a different way from during its active days, and as an *exonym*, naming an area in a different way from how its inhabitants themselves do – or, did.[23] Byzantium as well as Byzantinism are thus designations from within the Western semiosphere, imposed on a historical reality but sometimes taking on imaginary qualities. Dimiter G. Angelov has lately addressed the issue of 'the making of Byzantinism' and its negative effects on the political development of south-eastern Europe. Comparing Byzantinism to Balkanism, he finds them both to be imaginary constructs: 'Byzantinism, like Balkanism, is a concept of "otherness" by which Byzantium is turned into the crippled "other" of the cultural construct of Europe'.[24]

The negative connotations of Byzantinism in several modern European languages – English, German, Dutch, French, Italian, Swedish, Polish, Bulgarian and Romanian – are inventoried by Przemysław Marciniak in his monograph *Ikona dekadencji* [The icon of decadence].[25] A similar survey, in an article by Lubomíra Havliková, adds the likewise negative meaning of Byzantinism in Czech.[26] These altogether negative connotations apply partly to a discursive use (often in the plural, as in the rhetorical aims of *byzantinismes*

[20] H. Bodin, *Bruken av Bysans. Studier i svenskspråkig litteratur och kultur 1948–71* [*The Uses of Byzantium. Studies in Swedophone Literature and Culture 1948–71*] (Skellefteå, 2011).

[21] See Lotman, *Universe of the Mind*, 150. For examples on areas and situations where the Byzantine and the Western semiosphere overlap, see Bodin, *Bruken av Bysans*, esp. the introduction, 11–13, and the chapters on Karelia, 47–76, and Mount Athos, 159–200.

[22] See Marciniak, *Ikona dekadencji*, 42–3, with further references.

[23] For a more thorough historical discussion of the name Byzantium and other possible designations, see Marciniak, *Ikona dekadencji*, 51–81; and J.-M. Spieser, 'En guise d'introduction. Byzance et l'Europe', in *Présence de Byzance*, 7–30.

[24] D. G. Angelov, 'Byzantinism: The Imaginary and Real Heritage of Byzantium in South-Eastern Europe', in D. Keridis, E. Elias Bursac and N. Yatromanolakis, eds, *New Approaches to Balkan Studies* (Dulles, VA, 2003), 7.

[25] Marciniak, *Ikona dekadencji*, 41–51.

[26] L. Havliková, 'Ach, ta naše povaha byzantská aneb malé zamyšlení nad pojmem "byzantinismus"' ['Oh, that Byzantine nature of ours; a small reflection on the term "Byzantinism"'], *Slovanský přehled* (*Review for Central and Southeastern European History*, Prague) 95 (2009), 4, 425–32.

in French), partly to a historically based political, ideological and social use, where the essence of the Byzantine Empire is described as an autocracy based on orthodoxy, and characterised by rigidity and stifling ceremonial.[27] These negative meanings are characteristic of the Western and not of the Byzantine semiosphere, since no cultural system, taken as a whole, would base the description of its particular culture on a scornful definition. There is also yet another strict aesthetic and artistic meaning of Byzantinism, aiming to describe a certain style, for example in architecture, painting, fashion or music. Even this meaning seems to be characteristic of the Western semiosphere, since no cultural system would designate its own features by using a retronym or exonym.

The very same characteristics as mentioned above, namely autocracy, orthodoxy and rigidity, accompanied by their special aesthetics, can also be grounded, however, in a political and religious ideology. This is likewise spelled out as Byzantinism but is inherent to the Byzantine semiosphere and of no interest to the Western one. One of many instructive explanations of this, as it were, Byzantine meaning of Byzantinism is offered by Sture Linnér. He maintains the important role of the Orthodox Church in preserving Byzantinism, defined as 'a sense of spiritual affinity, fostered by an irrational belief in the fusion of the present and eternity, a sense of belonging to a theocratic society'.[28] Thus, within the Byzantine semiosphere, Byzantinism is an ideology still current in modern times, many hundreds of years after the defeat of Byzantium in 1453. It emphasises continuity rather than fragmentation, and instead of a finished and lost empire to be studied by historians, it offers a still living tradition with future political and religious aspirations.

The same features that are valued negatively within the Western semiosphere may therefore be turned into their opposites when related to the Byzantine cultural centre – for example, imperial autocracy is interpreted as a reflection of the heavenly state, while static features are considered in terms of positive continuity.[29] Such views and values, characteristic of the Byzantine semiosphere, have been discussed with regard to the Greek situation by Cyril

[27] See Cameron, 'The Use & Abuse of Byzantium', XIII.

[28] S. Linnér, *Bysantinsk kulturhistoria* [*Byzantine Cultural History*] (Stockholm, 1994), 242.

[29] See C. Mango, 'Byzantinism and Romantic Hellenism', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 28 (1965), 30; and J. Niehoff-Panagiotidis, 'To Whom Does Byzantium Belong? Greeks, Turks and the Present of the Medieval Balkans', in R. J. W. Evans and G. P. Marchal, eds, *The Uses of the Middle Ages in Modern European States: History, Nationhood and the Search for Origins* (New York, 2011), 147–8.

Mango in his instructive article 'Byzantinism and Romantic Hellenism' (1965), spanning from early Byzantine times, through the so-called 'messianic Byzantinism' following the Fall of Constantinople, to the Great Idea of the late-nineteenth century and its nationalistically coloured Byzantinism.[30] With regard to Slavic regions, they have been explored by Dimitri Obolensky in his seminal monograph *The Byzantine Commonwealth* (1971),[31] and with regard to Russia, by John Meyendorff, who considers religious Byzantinism (comprising Orthodox Christianity, its liturgical tradition, its monastic mysticism and the belief that the charisma of teaching is an authority within the church, not over it) to be the major legacy of Byzantium, since it transcends centuries and nationalities. Meyendorff also emphasises the difference between this religious vision, 'Christian Byzantinism', and its possible confusion with political and later nationalistic, secularised ideologies.[32] Yet an important contribution to the discussion of Byzantinism from the perspective of the Byzantine semiosphere is a recent article by Johannes Niehoff-Panagiotidis on the reinterpretation of the Byzantine past by the Greek, Turkish and Balkan peoples, also taking into consideration Russian claims that Russia is the true heir of Byzantium. It is emphasised that the heritage of Byzantium 'left a memory that was very difficult to incorporate into any kind of "national" patrimony'.[33]

The notion of Byzantinism can thus be seen to hold fundamentally different meanings, functions and values depending on whether it is used within the Byzantine or the Western semiosphere, i.e. whether it is related to Constantinople or Paris as the cultural centre where norms and values are established. The possibility of embracing Byzantinism and considering it as 'ours' from within either or both of these semiospheres will be demonstrated in more detail and discussed more thoroughly below. By analysing the chosen texts from a cultural semiotic point of view, we shall move between the Byzantine and the Western semiospheres and proceed from a central, i.e. non-peripheral, position within the Byzantine semiosphere, represented by the Russian Leontiev, via a central position within the Western semiosphere, represented by the French writers who make use of the peripheral Byzantine culture,

[30] Mango, 'Byzantinism and Romantic Hellenism', 29–43.

[31] D. Obolensky, *The Byzantine Commonwealth: Eastern Europe, 500–1453* (London, 1971).

[32] J. Meyendorff, 'Was there ever a "Third Rome"? Remarks on the Byzantine legacy in Russia', in J. J. Yiannias, ed., *The Byzantine Tradition after the Fall of Constantinople* (Charlottesville, VA, and London, 1991), 57–8.

[33] Niehoff-Panagiotidis, 'To Whom Does Byzantium Belong?', 149.

to a double peripheral position, belonging to both Western and Byzantine semiospheres, represented by Cavafy, living in the Greek diaspora of Alexandria.

Leontiev – 'Byzantinism organised us'

Konstantin Leontiev (1831–1891), the influential Russian conservative writer and philosopher who ended his days as a Russian Orthodox monk, published in 1875 a large article in 12 chapters on 'Byzantinism and Slavdom' ['Византизм и Славянство'].[34]

As Edward C. Thaden has shown, Leontiev always took highly individual standpoints and never hesitated to make his own combinations of political, social and aesthetic ideas.[35] At the end of his life he even advocated socialism as a possible solution. Thus, Leontiev agreed neither with the contemporary Panslavists and Slavophiles, who aimed to strengthen the political role of Eastern Europe, nor with Dostoevsky and Tolstoy in their respective quests for new political and religious solutions. Even those who stood ideologically close to Leontiev were often 'repelled by his strange and paradoxical combination of monastic Byzantinism, romantic aestheticism, scientific naturalism, and political reaction', as Thaden has noted.[36] According to Leontiev's own systematic interpretation of civilisational history, his hope was that Russia, with its base in Byzantinism, would step forth to fill the gap when Western Europe was declining. His thoughts were much discussed during his lifetime and have not ceased to attract attention ever since.[37]

[34] К. Н. Леонтьев, 'Византизм и Славянство', *Публицистика 1862/1879 годов. Полное собрание сочинений и писем в двенадцати томах* ['Byzantinism and Slavdom', *Papers from 1862–1869: Complete Works and Letters in Twelve Volumes*], ed. В. А. Котельников and О. Л. Фетисенко, vol. 7: 1 (St Petersburg, 2005), 300–443. Leontiev uses the word 'Византизм' (*Vizantizm*; Byzantism), the most usual form in Russian, while 'Византинизм' (*Vizantinizm*; Byzantinism) also occurs. Византизм is here translated as Byzantinism, since the meanings of these forms do not differ in any significant way for my purpose. For a discussion of both terms, see В. А. Бачинин, 'Византинизм и Византизм' ['Byzantinism and Byzantism'], Credo New теоретический журнал (2005), 4, at http://credonew.ru/content/view/509/57/ (last accessed 25 September 2014). See also the contribution by Sergey Ivanov in this volume.

[35] E. C. Thaden, 'Byzantinism', *Conservative Nationalism in Nineteenth-century Russia* (Seattle, WA, 1964), 164–82. For the following part, see especially 170–79.

[36] Thaden, 'Byzantinism', 179.

[37] Leontiev's discussion of Byzantinism was continued by Russian philosophers and theologians. Vladimir Soloviev (1853–1900) had an altogether negative view of Byzantinism and its role in Russia, see В. С. Соловьев, 'Византизм и Россия' ['Byzantism and Russia'],

But for Leontiev, Byzantinism was an idea with clear-cut contours, easy to understand and grasp. It had its basis in religion, politics, ethics, philosophy and aesthetics, and he examined all of these aspects in his article. Thus he states that Byzantinism means autocracy from a political point of view, Orthodoxy from a religious point of view, while he has no difficulty in deciding from an artistic or aesthetic point of view whether a certain fashion or taste is Byzantine.[38] As Thaden makes clear, Leontiev deliberately chose the term Byzantinism 'to describe his own concept of Russian society and civilization'.[39]

Leontiev thus opposed social mobility and universal elementary education. He saw bureaucracy as essential and was ready to support the state – the autocratic tsar and the privileged classes – if it chose to be ruthless and even cruel in order to safeguard Russia and its Byzantine traditions. Repressive measures or despotism might be necessary to save Russia from Western individualism, from Western capitalists and lawyers, according to Leontiev. Society was in need of discipline, severity and a firm hierarchical structure. He emphasised respect for the ceremonies and traditions of the Orthodox Church as well as the importance of the beauty of the Orthodox liturgical practices. Consequently, he rejected mediocrity and ugliness, features he found in contemporary European egalitarian ideas, Western society and the new technologies of the late nineteenth century. As a Christian believer, he had a pessimistic profile, rejecting historical as well as religious optimism, and even humanitarianism. Thaden points out that the individual human being for Leontiev was 'a helpless and insignificant creature' that had to 'be pessimistic about all earthly things, placing his unqualified faith in the wisdom of Divine Providence'.[40]

Сочинения в двух томах, vol. 2 (Moscow, 1989), 562–601. On the other hand, the Russian Orthodox priest and theologian Georges Florovsky (1893–1979) was convinced that 'the intellectual break from patristics and Byzantinism was the chief cause of all interruptions and failures in Russia's development', as he emphasised in the preface to *Ways of Russian Theology* (xvii), of which the first chapter is entitled 'The Crisis of Russian Byzantinism'. See G. Florovsky, *Collected Works of George Florovsky, vol. 5. Ways of Russian Theology. Part One*, ed. R. S. Haugh, trans. R. L. Nichols (Belmont, MA, 1979), 1–32. Florovsky's view was dismissed in turn by Nikolai Berdyaev (1874–1948) in a famous review, 'Ортодоксия и человечность' ['Orthodoxy and Humanness'], *Put'* 53 (April–July 1937), 53–65, where Berdyaev compares Florovsky's Byzantinism to Romanticism and characterises it as history. English translation: http://www.berdyaev.com/berdiaev/berd_lib/1937_424.html (last accessed 25 September 2014).

38 Leontiev, 'Византизм и Славянство', 300–301.

39 Thaden, 'Byzantinism', 170.

40 Thaden, 'Byzantinism', 171.

Leontiev made Byzantinism his ideal and regarded it as the very reason for the power of Russia and its many military victories, a thought he articulated in a rhetorically pregnant way: 'Для существования славян необходима мощь России. Для силы России необходим Византизм'.[41] According to Leontiev's view, the source of inspiration for all Russian life had been Byzantinism, and without it Russia could not survive. Anarchy and disorder, inspired by Western European ideas, would be the result. As Thaden noted, Leontiev found Russia to be an even better place for practising Byzantinism than Byzantium itself: 'In Russia, on the other hand, Byzantinism enjoyed the dual advantages of geographical inaccessibility and of a simple, fresh, and uncomplicated native population'.[42] Hence Leontiev himself maintains that the bond between Russia and Byzantinism could not be stronger or more important, since Byzantinism is directly tied to the survival of Russia:

> Византизм организовал нас, система византийских идей создала величие наше, сопрягаясь с нашими патриархальными, простыми началами, с нашим, еще старым и грубым вначале, славянским материалом.
>
> Изменяя, *даже в тайных помыслах наших*, этому византизму, мы погубим Россию.[43]

As Europe was declining, Leontiev proposed that Russia ought to grasp the opportunity to create an Orthodox union together with the Balkans, since they all shared a Byzantine heritage. Constantinople would be the capital of the union, and Russian military power its guarantor. In a letter, referred to by Thaden, he even suggested that the international socialist movement might have as its head the Russian tsar, who would imitate the Emperor Constantine and be seated in Constantinople as a new despot.[44] Leontiev inscribes all of Russian history, greatness and power within the frames of Byzantinism, when he says, 'Byzantinism organised us'. To him, Byzantinism was the more powerful idea, superior to national, ethnic and Panslavist ideas.

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[41] 'For the existence of the Slavs, Russia's power is necessary. For Russia's strength, Byzantinism is necessary'. Leontiev, 'Византизм и Славянство', 351 [my translation].

[42] Thaden, 'Byzantinism', 173.

[43] 'Byzantinism organised us, the system of Byzantine ideas created our greatness, matching our patriarchal, simple origin, our yet old and rough, originally Slavic material. If we should betray this Byzantinism, *even in our innermost thoughts*, we will destroy Russia'. Leontiev, 'Византизм и Славянство', 331 [Leontiev's emphasis; my translation].

[44] Thaden, 'Byzantinism', 177.

From a cultural semiotic perspective, it is clear that Leontiev is oriented towards a Byzantine cultural centre, situated in Constantinople. He interprets phenomena and creates his ideas in accordance with the norms of the Byzantine semiosphere, where Christian Orthodoxy and a Byzantine heritage are highly valued and much appreciated from both aesthetic and political points of views. The West is definitely placed outside this semiosphere, or on its extreme periphery, and is associated by Leontiev with entirely reprehensible phenomena. His orientation is solely towards the centre – he takes no interest in any periphery.

However, Leontiev's definition of Byzantinism coincides on all essential points with the one commonly encountered within the Western semiosphere: Byzantinism implies autocracy, bureaucracy and a highly ceremonial, traditionalistic Orthodox Christianity. The difference lies in how it is valued. Within the Byzantine semiosphere, where Leontiev operates, Byzantinism is regarded positively, as a hope for the future. Within the Western semiosphere, the notion is used rather as a negative attribute, to depreciate and mock a historical, long-lost, empire. Neither linguistic, nor ethnic nor national contexts are decisive in this case for the differing values ascribed to Byzantinism. They differ according to which cultural centre the speaker regards as his normative centre. For Leontiev, this centre is evidently Constantinople. Though he himself is neither a Greek nor a *Romaios* but a Slav, a Russian speaker and a Russian citizen, he is ready to reclaim Constantinople as his capital in the name of Byzantinism, which 'organised us' and whose ideas 'created our greatness'.

La Revue blanche – 'Our Byzantinism'

In French culture at the turn of the nineteenth- and early twentieth century, during a period described as the avant-garde or the *fin de siècle*, a prominent, cultural journal was published in Paris, entitled *La Revue blanche*, where the notion of Byzantinism [Fr. *byzantinisme*] was defined more than once.[45] A broad survey of the French reception of Byzantium during this period has been made by Olivier Delouis, who discusses especially the Byzantinism of the *fin-de-siècle* culture. He considers it with good reason to be 'an essentially Parisian divagation'.[46]

[45] For a comprehensive study of *La Revue blanche*, see P.-H. Bourrelier, *La Revue blanche. Une génération dans l'engagement 1890–1905* (Paris, 2007).

[46] O. Delouis, 'Byzance sur la scène littéraire française (1870–1920)', in M.-F. Auzépy, ed., *Byzance en Europe* (Paris, 2003), 101–51, here 136.

La Revue blanche existed for 15 years, 1889–1903. It covered the arts – painting, literature, theatre and to some extent music – and its opening manifesto was dedicated to pure artistic values. As Venita Datta has shown, *La Revue blanche* 'stood at the crossroads of important political, social, and cultural currents, mediating not only between the avant-garde and the establishment, but also between the literary and political milieus'.[47] Poetry especially was published, for example that of Mallarmé and Verlaine, together with reviews of poetical works, but also works of other periods – for example, one of Jane Austen's novels as a serial story. It published works of Symbolists alongside those of Naturalists.[48]

In this special context, the issue of Byzantinism was addressed in 1894. Paul Radiot wrote an article on 'Notre byzantinisme',[49] and a few issues later, another article taking up the subject appeared, written by Jean Schopfer (1868–1931). Its title was 'La civilisation Byzantine'.[50] Both Radiot and Schopfer were writers with an orientation towards the east. Radiot addressed Arabic and Islamic culture, and Schopfer, under the pseudonym Claude Anet, wrote about Russia and Persia.

Radiot's article is a confession of love for Byzantinism and an exalted prophecy about its rejuvenation and the coming days of glory in Paris. In his contemporary, *fin-de-siècle* Paris, Radiot recognises a Byzantine soul, still alive, though in tatters, patched up and threadbare.[51] According to Radiot, the old and the modern Byzantine soul share similar characteristics – anarchy and a taste for detail and fragmentation. To illustrate this desire for incoherent details, he undertakes a survey of the arts in both Byzantine and modern times – the world of letters, clothing, jewellery, mosaics, miniatures, sculptures, reliefs, architecture, music, and even alchemy. He compares Byzantine devices with modern ones, in order to find their similarities.[52] Since knowledge has become so rich, and since experience is flooded by new impressions, impossible

[47] V. Datta, *Birth of a National Icon: The Literary Avant-Garde and the Origins of the Intellectual in France* (New York, 1999), 34.

[48] Datta, *Birth of a National Icon*, 31.

[49] P. Radiot, 'Notre byzantinisme', *La Revue blanche* 28 (Février 1894), 110–25. See also Delouis, 'Byzance sur la scène littéraire française', 135.

[50] J. Schopfer, 'La civilisation Byzantine', *La Revue blanche* 32 (Juin 1894), 501–14. Schopfer's article was published under the heading 'Courtes études sur de grands sujets' ['Short studies on grand subjects'].

[51] Radiot, 'Notre byzantinisme', 111.

[52] Radiot, 'Notre byzantinisme', 111. For more examples, on Byzantine compilations compared to modern encyclopaedic practices, see Radiot, 'Notre byzantinisme', 115; on Byzantine panegyrics compared to modern journalism, see Radiot, 'Notre byzantinisme', 119.

to embrace all at once, the result has been colossal fatigue – the Byzantine man was fatigued, and so are we ourselves, Radiot concludes.[53]

Thus, Radiot observes that confusion flourishes by the Seine, as once it did by the Bosphorus.[54] He experiments with a metaphor: would it be possible to say that this profoundly altered Byzantine soul, whose former source of contagion was concentrated on the Bosphorus, had grown saplings and sprouts in contemporary Paris? If so, Radiot anticipates bitter critics and narrow-minded moralists to cry out: gangrene, or spiritual putrefaction. But in that case, he continues, Byzantinism implies a necessary decomposition foreshadowing a vast renovation. Byzantinism implies a patient search, pedantic or even maniacal, in all nooks and crannies for a treasure in disorder, soon enough to be reconstituted in net numbers.[55] As we can see, Radiot's initial metaphor, based on medicine and botany, rapidly dissolves into further ones. His move into the realm of decay follows organically, while the turn to economics is more unexpected. It is not hard to believe him, when he says that he and his contemporaries, just like the old Byzantines, have unfocussed minds.

In this way, by means of a thorough comparison between *fin-de-siècle* Paris and Byzantium, Radiot repeats the rhetorical parallel between the old Byzantium, which he also calls the first or Oriental one, and the modern Byzantium, which to him is the second or Parisian Byzantium.[56] He describes an imagined encounter in *via Justiniana* where a Byzantine procession, almost a masquerade, passes by. Sensing its putrid smells, he immediately switches time and space to evoke the Parisian milieu: how precious this putrefaction must be, if Parisians inhale it with such delight![57] Radiot's switch from Byzantium to *fin-de-siècle* Paris is fully conscious and strategic, as he regards them as equivalents.

A large part of Radiot's article on 'Our Byzantinism' is dedicated to influences from the Far East, for example from Japan, China and India, together with Africa. Without the Oriental seed, Radiot maintains, there would be no Byzantinism – 'our Byzantinism' is to him fertilised by the Exotic.[58] Therefore, at the end of the article, Radiot uses a Persian miniature, representing King Solomon with a halo, as a symbol of the present Parisian Byzantinism. This image offers Radiot the starting point for his concluding,

[53] Radiot, 'Notre byzantinisme', 111.

[54] Radiot, 'Notre byzantinisme', 112. Marcel Proust also noted a resemblance between the Seine and the Bosphorus, see Delouis, 'Byzance sur la scène littéraire française', 136.

[55] Radiot, 'Notre byzantinisme', 114–15.

[56] Radiot, 'Notre byzantinisme', 112, 114–16.

[57] Radiot, 'Notre byzantinisme', 116.

[58] Radiot, 'Notre byzantinisme', 117–18.

almost prophetic, invocation of 'the Art of tomorrow', which he characterises as Byzantinism. Based on the motif of the Persian miniature and especially King Solomon's halo, he reflects that the heads of his contemporaries also bear a furnace of quietly burning knowledge, before the Art of tomorrow breaks through. It will triumph – in Paris, the second Byzantium, or in any other capital in Europe, Africa or Asia. Victorious, the new Art will bring forth Byzantinism as a discovered treasure. Under another, more Oriental sun, and with other more truly barbarian blood, Radiot ends his exalted vision: Art will shape from it a halo of gold, totally young, naïve and pure.[59]

It is no surprise that Radiot's visionary article received a somewhat ironic reply from Jean Schopfer. He began by calling the Byzantine soul, presupposed by Radiot, into question: 'On parle de *notre byzantinisme*; il parait que nous avons l'âme Byzantine. Au fond, je n'en sais rien' ['There is talk of *our Byzantinism*; it seems that we have a Byzantine soul. Basically, I know nothing about it'].[60] Schopfer questions the ahistorical approach of Radiot, and asks which Byzantines he is really driving at, as well as who 'we' should rightly be.[61] Thereafter, he designs the greater part of his article as a learned exposé on the historical Byzantium, its art, its religious history (comprising Patristics and Orthodox dogma), and its many sciences – jurisprudence, alchemy and chemistry, mechanics, and its political and military organisation.[62]

Schopfer accuses Radiot of an ahistorical approach, and this makes sense, except that it misses the point, because Byzantinism is not a historical notion for Radiot. For him it is alive and still active, it interacts and interferes. We have already met a similar approach in the writings of Leontiev, but in contrast to the Russian writer, who counts Constantinople as the absolute cultural centre of the Byzantine semiosphere and a suitable capital for an Orthodox Christian political union safeguarded by Russian military power, Radiot regards Paris as the cultural norm and centre, and in so doing acts within the Western semiosphere.

From Radiot's perspective, Byzantinism comes, together with its many Oriental seeds, from the uttermost periphery of his Western semiosphere, to fertilise and renew its Parisian centre. The old, first, Oriental Byzantium will be restored and eventually brought to new life by the new, second, Western one, which is Paris. Historical characteristics, such as autocracy and orthodoxy, are non-issues for Radiot. His Byzantinism is an aesthetic attitude, honouring a cultural anarchy of details and fragmentation, sometimes disguised by the

[59] Radiot, 'Notre byzantinisme', 124–5.

[60] Schopfer, 'La civilisation Byzantine', 501. My translation.

[61] Schopfer, 'La civilisation Byzantine', 502–3.

[62] Schopfer, 'La civilisation Byzantine', 504–14.

scientific outlook of the late nineteenth century, with its tendency to map, collect and label foreign or Oriental artefacts. He looks for a Byzantine soul, for scents, tastes and all kinds of sentiments, and appreciates what he regards as a Byzantine disposition,[63] inclined towards compilations, incoherencies and displaced perspectives,[64] features characteristic of the aesthetics of both the avant-garde and Byzantium. As Radiot himself puts it: 'Byzantinisme et decadence, tant qu'on voudra!' ['Byzantinism and decadence, as you like!'].[65]

In this way, Byzantinism, a peripheral notion and phenomenon, is introduced from far away in both time and space, in order to mirror, fertilise and explain strange, incoherent and anarchical features of Radiot's contemporary, *fin-de-siècle* and decadent culture. The peripheral Byzantine cultural system begins to interfere with the Western, causing Byzantinism to be included also within the Western semiosphere, in the avant-garde culture of its very centre, Paris, where it is appropriated as 'ours'.[66]

Benda – A Byzantine on 'our Byzantinism'

Yet some years later, Radiot's and Schopfer's articles on Byzantinism and Byzantine civilisation were followed by a sequel in the same journal, *La Revue blanche*. Julien Benda (1867–1956) – identifying himself as a Byzantine – contributed two articles in support of Alfred Dreyfus, a French artillery officer of Jewish background, charged with treason who was only acquitted many years later.

Benda was later to become famous as the author of *La trahison des clercs* [*The Treason of the Intellectuals*, 1927, translated 1928], and as an influential political and social philosopher, novelist and literary critic. But in these relatively early articles in *La Revue blanche* he appears as a Byzantine, publishing first some notes and thereafter his diary: 'Notes d'un Byzantin' (1898) and 'Journal d'un Byzantin' (1899).[67] Both articles were soon included in Benda's first book,

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[63] Radiot, 'Notre byzantinisme', 110, 119.

[64] Radiot, 'Notre byzantinisme', 112, 115.

[65] Radiot, 'Notre byzantinisme', 112.

[66] See Lotman, 'Dialogue Mechanisms', *Universe of the Mind*, 143–50, esp. 146–7, for a schematic description of the stages in such a 'process of reception', and Even-Zohar, 'Laws of Cultural Interference', especially 62–3, on how interference occurs 'when a system is in need of items unavailable within itself'.

[67] J. Benda, 'Notes d'un Byzantin', *La Revue blanche* 17 (Sep–Déc 1898), 611–17; J. Benda, 'Journal d'un Byzantin', *La Revue blanche* 18 (Jan–Avr 1899), 401–22.

entitled *Dialogues à Byzance* (1900).[68] The reason for his choice of a Byzantine approach was that the defenders of Dreyfus had been publicly dismissed as modern equivalents of Byzantine philosophers, isolating themselves and continuing their endless discussions even during attacks on the empire.[69]

Benda used also the notion of Byzantinism, often in the plural [Fr. *byzantinismes*], many times in his voluminous writings.[70] Since his work continues to challenge readers and critics, his use of Byzantinism is well worth considering. That it merely reflects a means of expression, as Delouis has proposed, would seem to be too simple an explanation.[71]

In the early phase of his career, Benda associated the Byzantine stance with positive values.[72] Through his contributions in defence of Dreyfus, he succeeded in transforming 'Byzantine towers into citadels', and, thanks to his defence of the role of independent intellectuals, the 'ivory tower had become *engagé*', as Ray Nichols puts it in his study on Benda and political discourse.[73] But later on, before the Second World War, Benda used Byzantinism on the contrary as a term of criticism. In 1935, he saw Byzantinism, together with 'indulgent demagoguery for the violent ones' and the 'loss of liberty of spirit', as a failing of all those who did not declare their resistance to Fascism.[74] Some years later, during the war, he worked on a summing-up of his utterly negative views on modern French literature, represented for example by Mallarmé, Gide, Proust, Valéry and the Surrealists. It was published in 1945 in the monograph *La France byzantine ou Le triomphe de la littérature pure*.[75]

Flavio Luoni has traced the characteristics of Benda's use of the notion of Byzantinism and identifies the two eternal crimes of which Benda finds Byzantinism guilty: an emotional, poetical and personal expression together with love for the sensible world.[76] Benda wants Europe to break with its literary Byzantinisms, to let intelligence and intellect triumph over flesh and

[68] J. Benda, *Dialogues à Byzance* (Paris, 1900).

[69] R. L. Nichols, *Treason, Tradition, and the Intellectual: Julien Benda and Political Discourse* (Lawrence, KS, 1978), 32–3.

[70] See, for example, J. Benda, 'Byzantinisme ou Hypocrisie', *Les cahiers d'un clerc (1936–1949)* (Paris, 1949), 178–81.

[71] Delouis, 'Byzance sur la scène littéraire française', 151, note 244.

[72] Nichols, *Treason, Tradition, and the Intellectual*, 32–3.

[73] Nichols, *Treason, Tradition, and the Intellectual*, 43.

[74] Nichols, *Treason, Tradition, and the Intellectual*, 134.

[75] J. Benda, *France byzantine ou Le triomphe de la littérature pure* (Paris, 1945).

[76] F. Luoni, 'Le byzantinisme ou la littérature. Julien Benda face à ses cauchemars', in L. Nissim and S. Riva, eds, *Sauver Byzance de la barbarie du monde. Gargnano del Garda (14–17 maggio 2003)*, Quaderni di Acme 65 (Milan, 2004), 368.

sensations,[77] but Luoni cannot but point out that these devices, which Benda associates with Byzantinism, are exactly those that constitute literature as such.[78]

Benda's assessment of Byzantinism is mixed, changing from a positive to a negative view, from using it as a term of praise to one of criticism, and not in the least exalted as in Radiot's visionary article 'Our Byzantinism'. His attitude is nevertheless interesting, since he equates Paris and France of the early twentieth century with Byzantium, assigning to them Byzantine characteristics. Though he definitely writes from within a Western semiosphere, where Paris functions as the cultural centre, he chooses to regard himself as a Byzantine and his nation as a Byzantine France – albeit with conflicting purposes. Again, a peripheral notion is brought into the cultural centre in order to illuminate and name feelings of strangeness and the experience of being out of joint in contemporary culture and society, perceived as decadent.

There is yet another example of Benda's use of the notion of Byzantinism to be noted in this context. The French writer Jean de La Bruyère (1645–1696) is known for his translation of the Ancient Greek philosopher Theophrastos, to which he added a disproportionally large body of commentaries, concerned also with contemporary matters. He was addressed by Benda as 'the father of our Byzantinism': 'Vous me semblez le père de notre byzantinisme'.[79] Benda speaks in this essay directly to La Bruyère, long since deceased, appointing him as the founder of the literary tendency in modernist French literature so annoying to Benda. Once more, we can observe a case where Byzantinism, though detested, is articulated as 'our Byzantinism' and culturally integrated and embraced from within the Western semiosphere by one of its most famous and controversial intellectuals, situated at its very cultural centre, Paris.

Cavafy – 'Our glorious Byzantinism'

The poem 'Στην Εκκλησία' ['In the Church'] was written and rewritten by the Modern Greek poet Constantine Cavafy (1863–1933) over a period of

[77] Luoni, 'Le byzantinisme ou la littérature', 380–81.

[78] Luoni, 'Le byzantinisme ou la littérature', 368.

[79] J. Benda, 'La Bruyère', in *Tableau de la littérature Française XVIIe–XVIIIe siècles. Préface par André Gide* (Paris, 1939), 184: 'Vous me semblez le père de notre byzantinisme, dont aucune âme sensible ne saurait nier le délice. Quand au deuxième problème, vous l'avez résolu en inventant ces modes qui retiennent comme de force l'attention du lecteur – departs frappants, paragraphes courts, apostrophes brusques, variété de tour – et sont devenus de l'essence de l'écriture moderne'.

about twenty years before it was eventually published in 1912.[80] Its protracted creation gives it a unique position among Cavafy's so-called Byzantine poems, as a bridge between the earlier group from 1888–1892 and the later group from 1905–1929. Since Cavafy turned away from an earlier, basically Western attitude, which had been inspired partly by his reading of Gibbon's *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, towards an Eastern and more pro-Byzantine view, the bridging quality of this poem is well worth examining.[81]

Στην Εκκλησία

Την εκκλησίαν αγαπώ – τα εξαπτέρυγά της,
τ' ασήμια των σκευών, τα κηροπήγιά της,
τα φώτα, τες εικόνες της, τον άμβωνά της.

Εκεί σαν μπω, μες σ' εκκλησία των Γραικών·
με των θυμιαμάτων της τες ευωδίες,
μες τες λειτουργικές φωνές και συμφωνίες,
τες μεγαλοπρεπείς των ιερέων παρουσίες
και κάθε των κινήσεως τον σοβαρό ρυθμό –
λαμπρότατοι μες στων αμφίων τον στολισμό –
ο νους μου πιαίνει σε τιμές μεγάλες της φυλής μας,
στον ένδοξό μας Βυζαντινισμό.[82]

In the Church

I love the church – her standards,
her silver vessels, her candelabras,
her lights, her icons, her pulpit.

[80] D. Haas, *Le problème religieux dans l'œuvre de Cavafy. Les années de formation (1882–1905)* (Paris, 1996), 91.

[81] On Cavafy's reading of Gibbon, see Haas, *Le problème religieux*, 131–46 and 177–200; S. Ekdawi, 'Cavafy's Byzantium', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 20 (1996), 18–28; M. Pieris, 'C. P. Cavafy: "The Byzantine Nobleman" of Contemporary European Poetry', in E. Konstantinou, ed., *Byzantinische Stoffe und Motive in der europäischen Literatur des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts*, Philhellenische Studien Band 6 (Frankfurt am Main, 1998), 254 with further references.

[82] Κ. Π. Καβαφη, 'Στην Εκκλησία', *Ποιήματα Α' (1896–1918)*, ed. Γ. Π. Σαββιδη (Athens, 1965), at http://www.kavafis.gr/poems/content.asp?id=93&cat=1 (last accessed 25 September 2014).

When I enter the Greek church:
with the fragrance of the incense,
with the liturgic chants,
with the majestic presences of the priests
and the solemn rhythm of all their movements –
they are magnificently robed in the holy vestments –
my thoughts go back to a great splendour of our race,
to our glorious Byzantine age.[83]

Although it is not Byzantine in a thematic, historical sense, 'Στην Εκκλησία' refers significantly to Byzantium, or rather to Byzantinism. It has been the subject of numerous analyses and interpretations, of which the seminal study by Diana Haas, *Le problème religieux dans l'œuvre de Cavafy* (1996), should be especially mentioned.[84] The poem's last line, 'στον ένδοξό μας Βυζαντινισμό' ['to our glorious Byzantinism'],[85] is probably the most discussed case ever of the use of the notion of Byzantinism.

Several studies have emphasised that Cavafy's poems should not be read and understood at face value. The reason for this is that Cavafy is often engaged in a dialogue with his literary sources.[86] The 'I' of his poems gives voice to individuals, situated in certain historical and cultural milieus, reflecting and commenting upon incidents and events from their own perspective – it might thus be called a dramatised 'I' rather than a poetic 'I', which is conventionally identified with the author.[87] When it comes to analyses and interpretations of 'Στην Εκκλησία', however, there is a clear tendency to identify the 'I' of the poem, i.e. the one who loves, enters and visits a Greek Orthodox church, with Cavafy himself.

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[83] C. P. Cavafy, 'In the Church', trans. G. Valassopoulo, unpubl. draft from the Cavafy Archive, ed. and transcr. K. Ghika, at http://www.cavafy.com/poems/content.asp?id=342&cat=1 (last accessed 25 September 2014).

[84] Haas, *Le problème religieux*, 91–130.

[85] This English translation does not correspond with any published translation of the whole poem, but it has been rendered in this way by Anthony Hirst. See A. Hirst, 'Two Cheers for Byzantium: Equivocal Attitudes in the Poetry of Palamas and Cavafy', in D. Ricks and P. Magdalino, eds, *Byzantium and the Modern Greek Identity* (Aldershot, 1998), 109–10. For the purpose of this study, it has the advantage that the last word of the poem, 'Βυζαντινισμό', literally 'Byzantinism', has not been altered.

[86] Hirst, 'Two Cheers for Byzantium', 111.

[87] See further the discussion of Cavafy's voice, perspective and various modes in E. Keeley, 'Voice, Perspective, and Context in Cavafy', *Modern Greek Poetry: Voice and Myth* (Princeton, NJ, 1983), 3–6.

Much effort has been put into describing his situation living in the Greek diaspora of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, within the boundaries of the former Byzantine Empire. In brief, Cavafy was of Byzantine stock, and as such a descendant of the Phanariots, but he was also a Levantine Greek living in Alexandria, who had spent some years of his childhood and youth in England as well as in Constantinople.[88] According to the British writer E. M. Forster, he delivered his sentences 'with equal ease in Greek, English or French'.[89] He lived in, and wrote about, a hybrid culture.[90] As Anthony Hirst has pointed out, Cavafy uses the possessive pronoun 'our' especially in Byzantine contexts, for example together with 'nation', 'language' or 'race', as in 'Στην Εκκλησία'.[91]

The fourth line of this poem, 'Εκεί σαν μπω, μες σ' εκκλησία των Γραικών', of which the last words literally mean 'into a church of the Greeks', immediately addresses the problem of Cavafy's choice of perspective and his relation to the Orthodox Church. Is he making a point of being an outsider in relation to the 'church of the Greeks'? One of Cavafy's translators, Daniel Mendelsohn, remembers, however, that Cavafy was Greek Orthodox himself and thus chooses to translate the line as 'When I enter there, inside of a Greek Church', referring to Cavafy's own, similar correction of another literal translation. As Mendelsohn concludes, the meaning of this line should quite simply be to distinguish a Greek Orthodox church from churches of any other denomination in the cosmopolis of Alexandria.[92] I would like to add that this view corresponds precisely to Cavafy's choice of the denomination Γραικός [*graikos*] for 'Greek', which, as opposed to Έλλην [*Hellen*], is an exonym, i.e. what Greeks are called by others, for example in a diasporic context or by travellers.[93] There is thus no demand for a biographical interpretation to make this contrast clear.

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[88] On Cavafy's life, person and readings in relation to Byzantium, see Haas, *Le problème religieux*; Pieris, 'C. P. Cavafy: The "Byzantine Nobleman"'; Hirst, 'Two Cheers for Byzantium', 105; Ekdawi, 'Cavafy's Byzantium', 17–18; all with further references.

[89] E. M. Forster, 'The Poetry of C. P. Cavafy', *Pharos and Pharillon* (Berkeley, CA, 1980 [1923]), 92, quoted from Pieris, 'C. P. Cavafy: The "Byzantine Nobleman"', 262.

[90] P. Jeffreys, 'Cavafy, Forster and the Eastern question', *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 19 (2001), 1, 79.

[91] Hirst, 'Two Cheers for Byzantium', 105.

[92] D. Mendelsohn, 'Notes', in C. P. Cavafy, *Collected Poems*, trans. D. Mendelsohn (New York, 2009), 395.

[93] For Cavafy's own comments on the designations Greek, Roman and Hellenic, see Keeley, 'Voice, Perspective, and Context in Cavafy', 25, and Jeffreys, 'Cavafy, Forster and the Eastern question', 70, with further references. As Keeley explains, Cavafy identified himself as Hellenic (Ἑλληνικός), not as a Greek (Ἕλλην).

Closely connected with the issue of voice and perspective in Cavafy's poems is the question of their possible ironical qualities.[94] Did Cavafy intend these ironies, or is it up to the reader to identify ironical interpretations and carry them through?[95] Is he even ironic when he himself mentions his 'subtle irony' as an element 'that generations of the future will enjoy even more'?[96] Such a problem is perhaps insoluble, but it highlights the necessity for every reader and interpreter of Cavafy's poems, especially of 'Στην Εκκλησία', to be aware of their complexity.

Diana Haas's interpretation of the meaning of Byzantinism in Cavafy's poem, however, leaves no room for irony, maintaining that for Cavafy Byzantinism is a synthesis, both Hellenic–Oriental and Hellenic–Christian, based on the Byzantine Church with its important aesthetic and sensual element as the common denominator.[97] She rejects all kinds of ironic readings with respect to religious as well as nationalistic or racial feelings.[98] Cavafy's vision of Byzantinism within the Greek church constitutes, according to Haas, the nostalgic recollection of a past ideal.[99] To enter the church also means in this poem to be displaced in time, or rather in history.[100] Haas's conclusion on the significance of Byzantinism to Cavafy is that it forms a new and special cultural and artistic creation. Thanks to Byzantinism, the race that created it has been able to survive, just as historical experience has shown.[101] In this way, by emphasising the lasting aspects of Byzantinism, Haas situates her interpretation of the poem firmly within the Byzantine semiosphere, where norms and values are prescribed by its cultural centre in Constantinople.

The other extreme in interpreting 'Στην Εκκλησία' is as an ironic reading, represented by Cornelia A. Tsakiridou's standpoint in her article on Hellenism in Cavafy's works. In this case, the 'I' of the poem is identified with Cavafy standing outside the Orthodox Christian religious tradition:

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[94] For voice and perspective in Cavafy, see further Keeley, 'Voice, Perspective, and Context in Cavafy', 3–30.

[95] Keeley, 'Voice, Perspective, and Context in Cavafy', 12–18. See also Hirst's discussion of the different outcomes of the readings of an innocent versus an informed reader, Hirst, 'Two Cheers for Byzantium', 111.

[96] Cavafy's 'self-praise' is quoted from the English translation of Pieris, 'C. P. Cavafy: The "Byzantine Nobleman"', 261.

[97] Haas, *Le problème religieux*, 103. Haas also emphasises that Cavafy takes the German historian Ferdinand Gregorovius's definition of Byzantinism as his point of departure.

[98] Haas, *Le problème religieux*, 111.

[99] Haas, *Le problème religieux*, 119.

[100] Haas, *Le problème religieux*, 114.

[101] Haas, *Le problème religieux*, 128.

> *Byzantinismos* is the self-conscious observation – not observance – of the Eastern liturgy and of the poet's recollection of what history has taught him about Byzantium. *Byzantinismos* suggests that the tradition is not a living one; that outside the poet's creative imagination there is only "a church of the Greeks" with which he has nothing in common.[102]

This interpretation regards Byzantinism as a dead tradition. Thus, from a cultural semiotic perspective, it rather places Cavafy's poem within the Western semiosphere, dissociating itself from the Greeks and their Orthodox Christian belief.

Yet another way of reading this poem is the one suggested by Sarah Ekdawi. She assumes that Cavafy, because of his descent and his desire to belong to the poetic tradition of Byzantine Egypt, has chosen a central position with regard to Byzantine culture, instead of a peripheral position in relation to the Modern Athenian School.[103] According to Ekdawi, it is evident that Cavafy in his poem 'Στην Εκκλησία' associates the Greek Church with Byzantium. But, as she underlines, by the turn of the century, around 1900, a Greek Orthodox church was not regarded as an artefact, nor considered to hold any aesthetic or decorative qualities at all – its role was solely spiritual. Therefore, Ekdawi finds Cavafy's 'emphasis on the church's outward manifestations [...] provocative, if not openly mocking', and she emphasises that this poem is an extraordinarily original assertion.[104] Her conclusion is that the poem questions rather than commends devotional practices.[105] From a cultural semiotic perspective, such an attitude would mean that Cavafy's manifest intention is to relate to the Byzantine cultural centre, as Ekdawi has stated by way of introduction, but not in an altogether loyal way, since he provocatively questions its preferences for glittering gold liturgical utensils, solemn ceremonies and ritual processions, by confronting Orthodox ritual practices with Western values.

As far as the notion of Byzantinism is concerned, the poem 'Στην Εκκλησία' might better be regarded therefore as truly ambiguous.[106] Cavafy elaborates on such aesthetic devices, which are usually included in the Western semiosphere's definition of Byzantinism, and thus valued negatively. But at

[102] C. A. Tsakiridou, 'Hellenism in C. P. Cavafy', *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora* 21 (1995), 2, 121. Tsakiridou's emphasis. The phrase 'a church of the Greeks' has been commented on above.

[103] Ekdawi, 'Cavafy's Byzantium', 17–18.

[104] Ekdawi, 'Cavafy's Byzantium', 29.

[105] Ekdawi, 'Cavafy's Byzantium', 30.

[106] This ambiguity is especially observed also by Hirst, 'Two Cheers for Byzantium', 110.

the same time, since the scenery of the poem is inside an Orthodox church, i.e. within a religious context, Byzantinism is associated with its traditional political and religious use within the Byzantine semiosphere.

This ambiguity may also be found in an attribute of Byzantinism contained in Cavafy's poem, 'στον ένδοξό μας Βυζαντινισμό', 'to our *glorious* Byzantinism' (my emphasis), which could be interpreted within either the Byzantine or the Western semiosphere. Within the Byzantine semiosphere, it would be associated with the Orthodox liturgy performed in Greek, where it is idiomatic to glorify God or a saint by using exactly this word, ένδοξος,[107] or any kind of derivation from its root δόξα [*doxa*; glory], heard in every Orthodox service. Within the Western semiosphere, there is no call for any liturgically grounded reading. As we shall see below, ένδοξος might be rendered in English without reference to glory, perhaps as 'splendour' or as 'illustrious',[108] thus opening up for another, ironical interpretation of the poem, concerned with the futile imperial claims of modern diasporic Greeks, praying in church and hoping for Byzantinism to triumph.

However, since the liturgical context is so strongly suggested by the poem as a whole, it could be argued that there is good reason to choose the interpretation of ένδοξος as 'glorious', i.e. to find the poem's meaning in accordance with the norms and values of the Byzantine semiosphere. In any case, it is neither any saint nor God, but Byzantinism itself that is glorified in Cavafy's poem, by virtue of the splendour of the Greek church and the solemn liturgical rituals performed by the clergy. For the moment, and for the purpose of the following analysis of the translations of 'Στην Εκκλησία', I shall therefore support this interpretation of the poem within the Byzantine semiosphere, but I shall also return to the issue of the poem's ironic possibilities.

Byzantinism – Translated and Transferred

A translation necessarily implies a thorough analysis and interpretation, and Cavafy's ambiguous poem 'Στην Εκκλησία' provides an interesting case for

[107] The foremost example comes from Ex. 14: 18, where God shows his powers by drowning Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea and becomes glorified (ἐνδοξαζομένου). This episode, and the glorifying of God by his deeds, resounds in the Orthodox hymn genre canon, in its first ode, for example in the canon sung on Great Saturday.

[108] For 'splendour', see the translation made by E. Keeley and P. Sherrard; for 'illustrious', see the translations made by J. C. Cavafy, E. Sachperoglou and D. Mendelsohn. Detailed references below.

discussing the difficulties involved in translating the notion of Byzantinism. To this end, 16 translations into five languages have been brought together: seven English translations, four French, one German, two Swedish and two Russian ones, from the 1950s onward.

As Even-Zohar has shown, cultural changes come about through interference between the cultural systems included in a polysystem, and they often start in the peripheries. Translations made *between* different cultural systems introduce other problems and need other solutions than translations made *within* the same cultural system.[109] Translations involving different cultural systems, and not merely different languages, may therefore be distinguished by the term *transfers*. In the case of a transfer, the target text (the translation) has to be adapted to the contexts and associations of the new cultural system. Such an adaption might involve certain changes of words and expressions, or the addition of a commentary, or other kinds of explications. From a cultural semiotic perspective, it is therefore illuminating to discuss how the meaning of the notion of Byzantinism in Cavafy's poem 'Στην Εκκλησία' has been altered or preserved in these 16 translations. If they involve adaptations, as mentioned above, perhaps some of them would better be labelled as transfers, i.e. translations that cross the border between cultural systems.

Thirteen of the translations alter the source text's 'Βυζαντινισμό' ['Byzantinism'] in different ways. Six of them use the name of the empire, 'Byzantium',[110] or its equivalents in French ['Byzance'],[111] Swedish ['Bysans'],[112] German ['Byzanz'][113] and Russian ['Византии'].[114] Another solution, occurring only once, is to refer to 'notre gloire byzantine',[115] by using only the adjective to denote the empire. Yet another strategy is to refer to the Byzantine past (the age or the epoch): 'our illustrious Byzantine

[109] Even-Zohar, 'Translation and Transfer', 'System, Dynamics, and Interference in Culture: A Synoptic View', *Polysystem Studies*, 73–8, 85–96; Even-Zohar, 'Laws of Cultural Interference', 52–69.

[110] C. Cavafy, 'In Church', *The Collected Poems of C. P. Cavafy: A New Translation*, trans. A. Barnstone (New York, 2006).

[111] C. Cavafy, 'À l'église', *Constantin Cavafy*, trans. G. Cattaui (Paris, 1964); C. Cavafis, 'À l'église', *En attendant les barbares et autres poèmes*, trans. D. Grandmont (Paris, 2003).

[112] K. Kavafis, 'I kyrkan', *Dikter*, trans. B. Knös (Stockholm, 1963).

[113] K. Kavafis, 'In der Kirche', *Das Gesamtwerk. Griechisch und Deutsch*, trans. R. Elsie (Zürich, 1997).

[114] К. Кавафис, 'В церкви', *Лирика*, trans. Ю. Мориц (Moscow, 1984), at http://library.ferghana.ru/kavafis/k1.htm#03 (last accessed 25 September 2014).

[115] C. P. Cavafy, 'Dans l'église', *Poèmes*, trans. G. Papoutsakis (Paris, 1958).

past',[116] 'our glorious Byzantine age',[117] and its equivalent in French ['notre glorieuse époque byzantine'].[118] It is also possible to refer to its aftermath (the Byzantine tradition or the heritage): 'our Byzantine tradition',[119] 'our Byzantine heritage',[120] and its equivalent in Swedish ['vårt ... bysantinska arv'].[121] The notion of Byzantinism is thus replaced in the majority of these translations by the name of the past Byzantine Empire, the past Byzantine age or its heritage.

It is evident that this translational strategy means a displacement of Byzantinism in time, since it is made to designate the state of an empire that came to an end in 1453 and is thus long lost, or the characteristics of an epoch, likewise lost about five hundred years ago. This choice to replace the '-ism' with the vanished empire or epoch, however, is a considerable departure from the structure of Cavafy's poem, which never changes its present tense and thus favours the interpretation of Byzantinism as something possible to experience in contemporary time, for example in a Greek Orthodox church. The few translations that evoke the Byzantine tradition or heritage offer a somewhat different solution, and are perhaps better suited to rendering the idea of Byzantinism as something ongoing in the present time. The need nevertheless remains to explain and interpret the notion of Byzantinism by means of some kind of expanded phrase – by situating it in history or addressing it as a tradition.

Following Even-Zohar, the need to adapt Cavafy's Greek poem in such ways shows that these translations are made not only between different languages but also between cultural systems with different norms and values. In the 13 cases mentioned above, the word Byzantinism has been adapted to match the target culture. The meaning and connotations of Byzantinism within the Byzantine semiosphere have been altered or explained by expanded phrases to make it understandable to readers within the Western semiosphere, who would otherwise have interpreted Byzantinism in another way, according to the norms and values of their cultural centre in Paris.

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[116] C. P. Cavafy, *The Collected Poems: With Parallel Greek Text*, trans. E. Sachperoglou (Oxford, 2007).

[117] Cavafy, 'In the Church', trans. Valassopoulo, ed. and transc. Ghika.

[118] C. Cavafy, 'À l'église', *Présentation critique de Constantin Cavafy 1863–1933 suivie d'une traduction integrale de ses poèmes*, trans. M. Yourcenar and C. Dimaras (Paris, 1958).

[119] C. Cavafy, 'In Church', *The Complete Poems of Cavafy*, trans. R. Dalven (New York, 1961).

[120] C. P. Cavafy, 'In Church', in G. Savidis, ed., *Collected Poems*, trans. E. Keeley and P. Sherrard (London, 1975).

[121] K. Kavafis, 'I kyrkan', *Poeten i Alexandria. 154 dikter*, trans. G. Grunewald (Malmö, 2007).

Only three of the translations, two English and one Russian, have kept 'μας Βυζαντινισμό', 'our Byzantinism', from Cavafy's source text in Modern Greek. One of these English translations is that of John Cavafy. It ends: 'carry my thought to that imperialism – / to those great honours that befell our race / in its illustrious Byzantinism'.[122] However, while all of the other translations have kept the possessive pronoun 'our', here it is excluded in its immediate connection to Byzantinism. Furthermore, the tense has been changed into the preterite. These changes also render Byzantinism as something past, with connections to a distant imperialism rather than to 'us' in a contemporary setting. Even though this translation has kept the very word Byzantinism, the meaning is similar to the meaning in the majority of the translations discussed above, where Byzantinism has been altered to designate a past Byzantium or a Byzantine age. This indicates that a transfer between cultural systems has also taken place in this case, in a similar way to that discussed above.

The second English translation using the word Byzantinism is that of Daniel Mendelsohn: 'my thoughts turn to the great glories of our race / to our illustrious Byzantinism'.[123] Mendelsohn comments separately on his deliberate choice of the word Byzantinism. He refers to Haas's analysis, which, as we have seen above, rejects ironical readings and can be said to place the poem within a Byzantine semiosphere. Mendelsohn explains:

> "Byzantinism" importantly suggests not so much the empire itself as a historical entity, as rather the culture in the abstract, one whose institutions, particularly the Greek language and the Greek Orthodox Church, were the vehicle for the simultaneous continuation and transformation of the pagan Greek identity.[124]

However, he does not discuss the possible negative connotations of Byzantinism in English – or, by extension, in the Western semiosphere. With the help of the commentary, the intended meaning is supposed to be communicated to the reader. As follows from Even-Zohar's work referred to above, this kind of reliance on a commentary is an example of a characteristic strategy for such translations that are in fact transfers between cultural systems, in this case between the Byzantine and the Western one.

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[122] C. P. Cavafy, 'In Church', *Poems*, trans. J. C. Cavafy (Athens, 2003), at http://www.cavafy.com/poems/content.asp?id=221&cat=1 (last accessed 25 September 2014).

[123] Cavafy, 'In the Church', trans. Mendelsohn.

[124] Mendelsohn, 'Notes', 394.

The Russian translation where Byzantinism is used is by Aleksandr Velichansky. It ends: 'я думаю с гордостью: сколь прославлена раса наша, / Византизма нашего древняя лепота' ['I think with pride: how glorified is our race, / the Byzantinism of our olden beauty'].[125] Velichansky's translation is quite free, but it keeps the word Byzantinism [Византизм], and also, by associating it with beauty [лепота] and race [раса], its aesthetic and political–religious implications, which produce some of the ambiguity in Cavafy's Greek poem, as we have seen. It is also interesting that this translation uses the vocabulary of the Orthodox liturgy, which within the Russian context is performed in Church Slavonic: 'прославлена' ['glorified', cf. Cavafy's 'ένδοξό'] and 'лепота' [Church Slavonic for 'beauty']. Thus, Velichansky's translation immediately connects with the norms and meanings inherent in the Byzantine semiosphere in more than one way – by keeping the word Byzantinism together with its aesthetic and political–religious connotations, and by using Church Slavonic expressions. This example is therefore not a transfer between cultural systems, but a translation executed within the Byzantine cultural system.

Both the source text (Cavafy's poem in Greek) and the target text (Velichansky's Russian translation) are situated in this case within the Byzantine semiosphere, using norms and values they have in common. The diasporic situation of Cavafy in Alexandria has many features in common with the situation of Russia, which was Christianised from Constantinople and still uses the same liturgical tradition as the Greek Orthodox Church, though in its own language, Church Slavonic. The need to identify the Church of the poem as a Greek one, to mark distance as well as love, is therefore shared by the source text and the target text. No expanding adaptations or explanatory commentaries are needed, and no transfer between cultural systems is at hand, since the Russian context and its disposal of a Church Slavonic vocabulary in this case provides adequate possibilities for rendering the complex perspective of the poem, by keeping the notion of Byzantinism *and* its ambiguity, all within the Byzantine semiosphere.

This line of argument might also be helpful in achieving a better understanding of the ironic potential of Cavafy's poem. Even if 'Στην Εκκλησία' is not translated into another language, it could be transferred to another cultural system by the interpretative activity of scholars or critics, i.e.

[125] К. Кавафис, 'В церкви', in А. Л. Величанский, *Охота на эхо*, ed. Е. Д. Горжевская (Moscow, 2000), at http://library.ferghana.ru/kavafis/v4.htm#14 (last accessed 25 September 2014). My translation.

transferred from the Byzantine to the Western semiosphere. As a result of this transfer, when the poem is interpreted by norms supplied by another cultural system and is valued in relation to the preferences of another cultural centre, it acquires ironical qualities.

The interpretation made by Haas, referred to above, is an example in which no such transfer between cultural systems takes place, since the poem is explained in accordance with the norms and values of the Byzantine semiosphere. The ironic reading made by Tsakiridou, on the contrary, is an example of a transfer between cultural systems, since her interpretation suggests that there is a distance between the Greek Orthodox Christian setting of the poem and Cavafy's own standpoint, outside of it. Finally, Sarah Ekdawi's analysis points to the possibility that Cavafy's poem suggests a profound semiotic ambiguity surrounding which semiosphere it should be assigned to, the Byzantine or the Western.

In these ways, the poem 'Στην Εκκλησία' is able to challenge supposedly definite and stable interpretations from the perspectives of both semiospheres. In so doing it may also mirror the situation of Cavafy and his capacity of being able to relate alternately to both cultural centres, the Byzantine and the Western. When his poem says 'our glorious Byzantinism' it articulates a double peripheral point of view, from inside either of the Byzantine or Western semiospheres. It works by assigning Byzantine values to the norms of the Western cultural system, and inversely, by assigning Western values to the norms of the Byzantine cultural system.

As a conclusion to this analysis of translation and so as to adjust my earlier decision to read and interpret 'Στην Εκκλησία' within the Byzantine semiosphere, I would now like to propose that the poem as a whole should be characterised as a case of active and ongoing interference between the two cultural systems. As such, it sits in their shared border zone and relates in turns to their respective cultural centres, from both of their peripheries. It renders no normative position but a state of continuous cultural change. Cavafy's use of the puzzling notion of Byzantinism, conceived as 'ours' and so hard to translate, plays a decisive role in producing this interference.

Conclusion

From a cultural semiotic perspective, inspired by Yuri Lotman and Itamar Even-Zohar, it has been demonstrated that the notion of Byzantinism is used in both the Western semiosphere, relating to Paris as its cultural centre, and

the Byzantine semiosphere, relating to Constantinople. Since Byzantinism functions in different ways and carries different meanings and values in these semiospheres, it has often been used to *separate* the semiospheres from each other. In this sense, the notion of Byzantinism marks the cultural border between 'us' and 'them', from the point of view of the Western as well as the Byzantine semiosphere. An all too simple and superficial understanding of this phenomenon has been challenged, however, by various writers and intellectuals, who represent different languages and cultures, and who operate within either the Western or the Byzantine semiosphere, yet who all say 'our Byzantinism'. They do not necessarily value Byzantinism in a positive way, but they embrace it nevertheless and use it as a critical or visionary tool within the sphere of their own cultural, literary and intellectual tradition. By saying 'our Byzantinism' they include it in their own semiosphere.

We have seen that Byzantinism might strengthen the sense of belonging to a Byzantine community, or articulate the desire to do so, as in the case of Konstantin Leontiev's Russian article on 'Byzantinism and Slavdom'. In this case, the notion of Byzantinism opens up for a larger community and mission, as it goes beyond other more limited, primary belongings, for example the Russian state or the Slavic peoples, and provides a plan for the future. Leontiev's originally Russian 'we' thus expands by subscribing to Byzantinism, i.e. by relating it to the Byzantine cultural centre of Constantinople and its norms and values. At the same time, Byzantinism serves him as a means of organising resistance on the borders towards the Western semiosphere, where revolutionary ideologies located in the periphery threaten the Byzantine cultural system.

The notion of Byzantinism might also, as we have seen in the French avant-garde context of *La Revue blanche*, be brought from the periphery of the Western cultural system into *fin-de-siècle* Paris, right into the heart of the Western semiosphere. There, it was discussed in relation to avant-garde and decadent aesthetics, and embraced by a visionary cultural elite that was trying to understand and label the role of contemporary art by promoting 'our Byzantinism'. Half a century later, Julien Benda was still addressing the issue of Byzantinism as a feature of French literature. It is remarkable that, in the French context, both a defender of the avant-garde such as Radiot and a harsh conservative critic such as Benda were able to use 'our Byzantinism' as a catchphrase.

Yet another example of the use of this phrase, 'our Byzantinism', expressed in Greek by Cavafy in his poem 'Στην Εκκλησία' ['In the Church'], has been shown to be an exceptionally hard piece to interpret and translate. In the

great majority of the analysed target texts, the actual word Βυζαντινισμός ['Byzantinism'], used in the Greek source text, has been altered, expanded, adapted or supported with explanatory comments. All of these devices imply that not only a translation between languages has taken place but rather a transfer between the Byzantine and the Western cultural systems. But, as we have seen, there are also a few examples – such as Haas's interpretation and Velichansky's Russian translation – undertaken wholly within the Byzantine semiosphere, resulting in readings that are loyal to the norms and values of the Byzantine cultural centre and where Byzantinism is directly glorified.

The fact that Cavafy's poem invites so many different interpretations, some of them ironic, is also proof, however, of its inherent semiotic ambiguity. From a cultural semiotic perspective, Cavafy's poem has been seen to represent a case of interference between the Western and the Byzantine cultural systems. It operates in both of their border zones, in their peripheries, and, as a result, is able to relate alternately to the norms and values of their respective cultural centres. Rather than adherence to any culturally central norms it articulates a state of cultural change.

To conclude: Byzantinism conceived as 'ours' is not a culturally centralised notion carrying positive value only within the Byzantine semiosphere. This complex and enigmatic notion can, as in Cavafy's poem 'Στην Εκκλησία' where it plays a decisive role, be characterised by its tendency to cause interference and transfers in the peripheries of both the Western and Byzantine cultural systems. So far, the notion of Byzantinism has proved to be able to *both* separate *and* unite East and West, i.e. the Byzantine and the Western semiospheres. From within either, Byzantinism can be shown to be not only theirs, but also ours.

Chapter 2

Hieronymus Wolf as Editor and Translator of Byzantine Texts

Diether Roderich Reinsch[1]

Hans-Georg Beck, in the title to his translation of the autobiographical description of Hieronymus Wolf's life,[2] called him the 'father of German Byzantine Studies' and it is under this honorific title that Wolf is known to the broader public, at least in academic circles. Previously, Wolf had even been called the 'father of Byzantine history'.[3] Whether such metaphors are appropriate is a matter for discussion. Wolf was, even though reluctantly, the first editor and translator of Byzantine texts in Germany, but I doubt his function can really be deemed 'fatherhood'.

It is neither necessary nor possible to give a full account of Wolf's life here; this has been broadly dealt with by Beck and in a Munich PhD thesis of 1992, published in augmented form as microfiche in 1998.[4] Therefore, I shall restrict myself to Wolf the editor and translator of Byzantine texts and give only in abbreviated form information regarding the time and the environment in which Wolf lived. His lifetime spanned the period from 1516 to 1580. He was born in Oettingen, the capital of the small southern German principality of the same name, and he died in the free imperial city of Augsburg. He lived during the reign of Emperor Charles V (1516–1555) and the subsequent division of the Habsburg–Spanish Empire between Philip II (heir to the 'Spanish' holdings) and Ferdinand I, who took over the German hereditary lands, Bohemia and the north of Hungary. The two emperors had to deal with several

[1] Freie Universität, Berlin.

[2] H.-G. Beck, *Der Vater der deutschen Byzantinistik. Das Leben des Hieronymus Wolf von ihm selbst erzählt* (Miscellanea Byzantina Monacensia 29) (München, 1984).

[3] R. Schmidbauer, *Die Augsburger Stadtbibliothekare durch vier Jahrhunderte* (Abhandlungen zur Geschichte der Stadt Augsburg) (Ausgsburg, 1963), 62.

[4] H. Zäh, *H. Wolf, Commentariolus de vita sua, herausgegeben und übersetzt sowie mit Einleitung, Kommentar und Verzeichnis der gedruckten Werke des Hieronymus Wolf versehen*, PhD Munich (Donauwörth, 1998).

problems: the constant rivalry between them and the crown of France (with the additional complication of the very important third power of the papacy); and the major roles played by England (under Henry VIII and Elizabeth I), by the Ottoman Empire and even by Persia. This was also the period when Germany became a collection of princely states, with conflicts between the central power of the emperor and the estates, the prince-electors, the counts, the knights and the free imperial cities. Wolf saw the Great Peasants' War of 1525 as a child of nine years. Furthermore, this was a period of various reform efforts in the church, which ended with the separation of the Protestants and the consolidation of the German Protestant princes as an independent power despite the military defeat of the Schmalkaldic League in 1547. Here, the Byzantines came in as possible principle witnesses in the dispute with Rome. Last but not least, this was the period when Southern and Central Europe were threatened by the Ottoman Empire, which under Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent had reached the peak of its power. After the battle of Mohács in 1526, the Ottoman Empire had annexed the greater part of Hungary. In 1529 the Turks besieged Vienna, and even after their withdrawal the frontier between the Habsburg and the Ottoman Empire, which ruled over the whole Balkan peninsula, was situated not far from Vienna. This, as well as the denominational struggles, was one of the main reasons for the growing interest in Byzantium and Byzantine history.

In the sixteenth century, Renaissance thought and humanism had crossed the Alps. In some cities the financial power of early capitalism had conglomerated and Augsburg was leading the way due to the trading and banking houses of the Fuggers and the Welsers. Capital could decide the elections of emperors (as it did in the case of Charles V) and it enabled campaigns and colonial enterprises, such as the Venezuela contract between the Welsers and Charles V.

In Southern Germany the free imperial cities led the Reformation: Strasbourg, Constance, Basel, Memmingen, Ulm, Nuremberg, Augsburg. Nuremberg and Augsburg additionally ranked among the most important trading and commercial centres of Europe at the time. Further, the cities of Worms, Speyer, Regensburg, Augsburg and Nuremberg also hosted Imperial Diets. It was at Augsburg in 1530 that Philipp Melanchthon laid what later became known as the *Confessio Augustana* before the Diet, and at the Imperial Diet of 1555 in the same city the *Religious Peace of Augsburg* was proclaimed by the Diet. From 1549, the city was a so-called 'equally represented imperial city', which meant it had a denominationally mixed governmental and administrative system.

Hieronymus Wolf, the son of a vassal in the service of the prince of Oettingen, lived in this environment. From 1551, Wolf was firmly established in Augsburg, in the beginning at the house of Fugger, and afterwards as principal of Saint Anna's Gymnasium. He had experienced a difficult education in the classical languages, especially since he had also studied law; other trials and tribulations came with being a courtier in princely and episcopal administration. During his itinerant life as a student, and later on as a teacher, he lived in Nuremberg, Tübingen, Würzburg, Wittenberg, Mühlhausen (in Thuringia), Nuremberg again, Strasbourg, Basel and Paris. Over time a central strain of his personality became more and more apparent: his affection for the classical languages and literatures of Latin and Greek, and his extraordinary proficiencies in this field. His excellent mastery of *utriusque linguae* ['both languages'] is documented by his numerous editions, translations and commentaries of classical authors, in particular Isocrates, Demosthenes and Cicero, but also by the different dedication poems, and his poem on the naval victory of the Christian fleet over the Ottomans at Lepanto in 1571. Further proof that attests his command of Greek and Latin is provided by his voluminous corpus of letters, which are, for the most part, unedited.[5]

The unsettled life he lived was not uncommon among humanists of his time, but in his case there was an additional reason: his hypochondria and permanent dissatisfaction. He would even give up jobs he liked. This itinerant life ended only in 1551, when Wolf entered the service of Johann Jakob Fugger. Johann Jakob was a nephew of Anton Fugger, at this time the principal of the bank and commercial company, and after 1560, for a short time, his successor. Wolf in some way had applied to Johann Jakob, dedicating his translation of Demosthenes to him and bringing with himself a copy of the book from Basel to Augsburg.[6] His duties in the service of Johann Jakob consisted in conducting the Latin correspondence of his employer and supervising his library. The supervision of the library included the duty to act as an editor of texts, whenever the Fuggers charged him with such a task, for which he got, of course, considerable extra remuneration. For quite some time the Fuggers and their

[5] Two of his Greek letters have been edited by K. Hajdú, 'Griechische Autographe des Hieronymus Wolf in der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek', *Codices Manuscripti* 44/45 (September 2003), 41–67. These letters show Wolf as a stylistically confident classicist who writes classical Attic fluently. To be sure he slips in some orthographic misspellings (for instance εἰωθείας instead of εἰωθυίας, καθαρωτάται and ἐπιμονωτάται instead of καθαρώταται and ἐπιμονώταται), but from his style and vocabulary it is evident that he really has appropriated the structure and richness of the Greek language.

[6] Zäh, *Commentariolus* 84,6–7: 'Augustam id opus dorso mecum attuli'.

advisers were eager for texts that could give them, and the broader public, a general survey of Byzantine history. The leading motif for them was, apart from the general character of history as a treasure of examples, to get information about these historical enemies of the Ottomans and indirectly, or directly, about the Ottomans themselves. This was not just the situation in Augsburg; people in Vienna also made special efforts to acquire manuscripts containing works on Byzantine history in the East, especially in Constantinople.

In 1555, three codices connected to this subject were brought to Augsburg by Hans Dernschwam. He was an ex-employee of the Fuggers' banking house, having managed their copper-mines in Hungary. He had travelled together with a delegation of Emperor Ferdinand I to the court of Süleyman the Magnificent. The three codices contained the world chronicle of Ioannes Zonaras (partly the entire, rather bulky work, partly some portions); today they are kept in the Bavarian State Library in Munich.[7] One of them,[8] besides segments of Zonaras's chronicle covering the period from Constantine I to the end of the work in the year 1118, also contains the Χρονικὴ Διήγησις ['Chronological Narrative'] of Nicetas Choniates, which covers the years from 1118 to 1206.

The Fuggers's house had at its disposal manuscripts covering a substantial part of Byzantine history, and it also hosted a gifted philologist, who had mastered both the classical languages and who, therefore, was able to translate these texts into Latin and to edit them. The Fuggers possessed a learned triumvirate consisting of Johann Jakob himself, the already-mentioned Hans Dernschwam, who was not only a good manager but also a man of letters, and Ludwig Kiel (Ludovicus Carinus), a humanist, who had functioned as a housemaster and teacher for the Fuggers, and who had great influence on them. This triumvirate decided to charge Wolf at first with the translation into Latin and the edition of the Greek text of Zonaras. Up to this time Wolf had not developed any interest in Byzantine texts, but his position as a person in dependent employment meant he had no choice but to perform the task. This he did diligently and conscientiously, albeit grudgingly, moaning and wailing. In Wolf's opinion, he had come from the sublime intellectual world of Demosthenes and Isocrates, and now had to sink to the depths of Zonaras, whom he called derisively 'the monk'.[9] He spent a year on this enterprise, not without the help of an amanuensis, Jeremias Martius (Mertz), who later became the town physician of Augsburg. Even in the preface to his work Wolf complains that he would have rather

[7] Codices Monacenses Graeci 324, 325 and 93.

[8] Monac. gr. 93.

[9] In reality Zonaras was a former high-ranking official, who only became a monk when he lost his post and retired to a monastery.

worked on a more splendid author.[10] He compares Zonaras with a stone that he – unlike Sisyphus – after a year felicitously had moved to the summit.

How did Wolf use his manuscripts? He had at his disposal five Zonaras texts: the three brought to Augsburg by Dernschwam; another one, which is today lost, that contained a text covering the period from Constantine I to Justinian I; and one more, lent to Augsburg from Vienna.[11] Of course, given the state of methodology at that time, there was no thought given to constructing a *stemma codicum*. So Wolf proceeded in conformity with the general practice of the time. He took one of the manuscripts[12] as a basis, using the Vindobonensis systematically and the other manuscripts sporadically in addition. The traces of this activity can be seen as handwritten notes made by Wolf himself in the margins of the manuscripts. In volume 3 of the edition of Zonaras, in the *Corpus Bonnense* containing books XIII–XVIII these interventions are duly documented in the *apparatus criticus*. Wolf's edition, and particularly his Latin translation, are appreciated by Büttner-Wobst as quite respectable philological achievements.[13] Wolf's notes found in the margins of the manuscripts and the printed text itself also document the conjectural abilities of Wolf. Several of these conjectures are successful (confirmed by other manuscripts); others, on the contrary, are rather odd. I shall give an example for each type of conjecture. In cod. Monac. gr. 93 the text of the slogan shouted by the Blues against Emperor Phocas runs as follows:[14] 'ἄπιθι, μάθε ἀντίστασιν, ὁ Μαυρίκιος ζῇ' ['Go away! Learn resistance, Mauricius is alive']. This does not make sense. Wolf noted in the margin of the manuscript, 'puto τὴν κατάστασιν. nisi forte κατάστασις ἀντὶ σωφροσύνης ponatur'. This is excellent. The other manuscripts (and Büttner-Wobst in the printed text) have 'ἄπιθι, μάθε κατάστασιν, ὁ Μαυρίκιος ζῇ' ['Go away! Learn modesty, Mauricius is alive']. In another place,[15] Zonaras (following Michael Psellos)

[10] 'Hieronymi Wolfii in Ioannis Zonarae Annales Praefatio', in *Ioannis Zonarae Annales ex recensione M. Pinderi* (Bonnae, 1841), XXXVIII: 'In meae infelicitatis parte numeravi, quod in auctorem luculentiorem non incidissem' ['I also count among my infelicities that I did not stumble upon a more splendid author'].

[11] Today Vindobon. histor. gr. 16.

[12] Up to Zonaras, book XII this was Monac. gr. 324; for books XIII–XVIII Monac. gr. 93.

[13] *Ioannis Zonarae epitomae historiarum libri XIII–XVIII*, ed. Th. Büttner-Wobst (Bonnae, 1897), IX: 'Praeterea vir ille doctissimus editioni suae interpretationem latinam adiecit diligentissime compositam' ['Moreover this most wise man added to his edition a most diligently prepared Latin translation'].

[14] Büttner-Wobst, 196,18–19.

[15] Büttner-Wobst, 582,1–3.

speaks of Romanos III as not being erotically interested in his wife Zoe: 'ἦν γὰρ καὶ φύσει νωθὴς πρὸς μίξιν καὶ μαλθακώτερος, ἤδη δὲ καὶ ὁ χρόνος αὐτῷ τὴν κίνησιν ἤμβλυνεν' ['because he was by nature dull to intercourse and quite weak, and time had deadened his impetus']. In the margin of cod. Monac. gr. 324 there is a correction for 'κίνησιν'. Wolf noted 'βίνησιν', a word that does not exist in Greek but is correctly built from the verb βινέω ['to have intercourse'], which is well known from ancient comedies. To Wolf's honour it must be said that in his printed text we do not read 'βίνησιν' but the correct 'κίνησιν'.

Wolf had just finished the edition of his unbeloved 'monk', when his principals urged him to continue his work as editor and translator with Nicetas Choniates. Choniates he named 'semibarbarus'.[16] Poor Nicetas was considered a '*semibarbarus*' by Wolf, because among the manuscripts available to him was one containing a *metaphrasis* or translation into a lower linguistic register nearer to the spoken language of the fourteenth century. Wolf thought that this *metaphrasis* was the original text, whereas he considered the real Nicetas a revision transposing the text into better (more 'elevated') Greek.

It was the general prejudice that the Byzantines could only write a barbarised version of Greek that had seduced Wolf to this false conclusion. Nevertheless, because the main object of all these editions of Byzantine historians was to convey to the reader their content and not the linguistic form, Wolf was relieved that he could translate this supposed adaptation of the original text. He would have been doomed to failure trying to translate the barbarised linguistic form of the alleged original, as he admitted freely.[17]

Therefore for his edition of Nicetas too, Wolf relied on cod. Monac. gr. 93, which had already served him as the leading manuscript for the Zonaras edition. He had at his disposal one other manuscript from the library of Johann Jakob Fugger. Wolf also used the alleged original text (containing the fourteenth-century *metaphrasis*), present in a codex bought by the city of Augsburg in a job-lot of one hundred manuscripts bought from Antonios Eparchos in 1544.[18] He often followed this version in his translation, where he had to simplify the original, which is sometimes not easy to understand

[16] Zäh, *Commentariolus* 103,18: 'alter monachus, semibarbarus alter' ['one (i.e. Zonaras) a monk, the other (i.e. Choniates) a semi-barbarian'].

[17] Zäh, *Commentariolus* 103,21–3: 'nec a me converti potuisset, nisi alius quispiam (Alexander Chartophylax Byzantinus, ut opinor) paraphrasin eam, quae edita est, conscripsisset' ['And I would not be able to translate it, if not somebody else (Alexander Chartophylax, I think) composed this paraphrase, which has been edited'].

[18] Today cod. Monac. gr. 450.

because of its use of complicated metaphors and other sophisticated devices. The result of all this was that neither his edition nor his translation of Nicetas won high praise. Van Dieten passes the following judgement on the edition:

> Der kr(itische) App(arat) ist so unklar, daß man meistens nicht weiß, was er welchem Codex entnommen hat. Die "laboriosa collatio" von drei Hss., welche er sich offensichtlich zum Verdienst anrechnete, hat seiner Ausgabe mehr geschadet als genützt.[19]

Tafel calls Wolf's translation an 'oberflächliche lateinische Verdolmetschung' and speaks about his 'triviale Anmerkungen'.[20] Grabler's judgement is just a little more benign:

> Sie [i.e. the translation] ist an sich nicht schlecht, Mißverständnisse und Fehlübersetzungen sind nicht sonderlich häufig [...] nur ist sie sehr ungenau im einzelnen und weicht allen Schwierigkeiten aus. Auch ist ihr vereinfachender Ausdruck, wenn man das Griechische nicht zu Rate zieht, mißverständlich [...] Auch leidet die lateinische Übersetzung darunter daß Wolf oft der von I. Bekker so genannten Handschrift B [i.e. the Monac. gr. 450 containing the *metaphrasis*] folgt.[21]

Even so, Wolf had translated Nicetas with much less reluctance than Zonaras. As he writes: 'When I, so to speak, had forced my way out of the rough terrain of Zonaras and I had come to the plain of Nicetas Acominatus Choniates and to his meadows blossoming with all kinds of flowers, this translation work for me began to be more pleasant than laborious'.[22]

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[19] Nicetae Choniatae historia, rec. Io. A. van Dieten (Berlin and New York, 1975), I, CV: 'The apparatus criticus is so unclear, that one mostly cannot know what he has taken from which codex. The "laboriosa collatio" of the three Mss., which he credited to his merit, was more damaging than helpful to his edition'.

[20] G. L. F. Tafel, *Komnenen und Normannen* (Ulm, 1852), XVIII.

[21] F. Grabler, *Die Krone der Komnenen* (Byzantinische Geschichtsschreiber 7) (Graz, Wien and Köln, 1958), 22: 'It [i.e. the translation] in itself is not bad, misunderstandings and mistranslations are not very frequent [...] but it is very inaccurate in details and evades all difficulties. Also its simplistic expressions are mistakable when one does not consult the Greek. And the Latin translation suffers since Wolf often follows the Manuscript B, as called by Bekker'.

[22] 'Ad magnificum et generosum virum, D. Antonium Fuggerum', in *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantina Historia cura Ludovici Schopeni* (Bonnae, 1829), XCVIII: 'Sed cum e Zonarae velut salebris eluctatus, in Nicetae Acominati Choniatae planitiem et quasi

With Zonaras and Nicetas (published together in 1557 by Oporinus in Basel) they had obtained a *corpus historiae Byzantinae* covering the period from Constantine I to the conquest by the Latins, but the aspiration was for an entire corpus of Byzantine history. To continue the narration after the end of Nicetas's text, at least until the year 1341, the Fuggers and their employees had at their disposal a manuscript containing the first 12 books of Nicephorus Gregoras's *Roman History* (Ῥωμαϊκὴ Ἱστορία)[23] and another manuscript[24] about which Wolf does not say anything. Wolf took this manuscript as the basis of his edition, supplementing it with the aid of the Monacensis manuscript, especially for some greater omissions.

Wolf could not warm to this text, nor to this author. He writes in his autobiography:[25] 'In the same year [i.e. 1558] I finished the Nicephorus Gregoras, not because I wanted the money – it was 100 guilders – but because I did not wish to offend my patron, who said to me when I started my work without any enthusiasm that I had earned already too much money'. In another place he complains: 'Gregoras has weakened my eyes rather than strengthened my purse, as Zonaras had weakened my stomach'.[26] His abbreviating translation, which accompanies the text, is called 'honest' by van Dieten, but van Dieten attests to Jean Boivin's edition from 1702 as a huge step ahead when compared with Wolf's; and to Boivin's translation as very good when it is compared with Wolf's. Wolf's translation, according to van Dieten, is 'not without merits, but on the other hand not free from serious mistakes', and van Dieten notes especially that Wolf 'had suppressed systematically whatever he considered as superfluous rhetoric'.[27]

With Gregoras, the *corpus historiae Byzantinae* had reached the year 1341, lacking a text that would cover the years up to the capture of Constantinople by the Ottoman Turks in 1453. Wolf did not have at his disposal an author who

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variis flosculis vernantia prata pervenissem: iucundus mihi potius quam gravis esse labor interpretationis ille coepit'.

[23] Today cod. Monac. gr. 153.

[24] See J. L. van Dieten, Entstehung und Überlieferung der Historia rhomaike des Nikephoros Gregoras, insbesondere des ersten Teiles: Lib. I–XI (PhD, Köln, 1975), 4–5; today cod. Oxon. Bodl. Laud. gr. 24.

[25] Zäh, *Commentariolus* 109,30 – 110,2: 'Eodem anno et Nicephorum Gregoram absolui non tam praemii cupiditate, quod 100 florenorum fuit, quam metu offensae patroni, qui minus alacriter illam provinciam suscipienti semel in os dicebat, me nimis esse locupletatum'.

[26] Zäh, *Commentariolus* 110,26–7: 'Gregoras igitur oculos mihi potius hebetavit quam loculos refersit, ut Zonaras stomachum debilitarat'.

[27] See J. L. van Dieten, *Nikephoros Gregoras, Rhomäische Geschichte, Historia Rhomaïke, übersetzt und erläutert, Erster Teil (Kapitel I–VII)* (Stuttgart, 1973), VII.

could fill in this gap. Therefore, it was very convenient that Philipp Gundel, a lawyer from Vienna, sent his Latin translation of Laonicus Chalcocondyles to him. Wolf eagerly read the text and realised that this was exactly the work he needed to complete the *Corpus*. In 1556, another Latin translation of Chalcocondyles, by Conrad Clauser, was published in Basel. This was the translation used for the *Corpus* after it had been corrected in some places with the aid of Gundel's translation. There was no manuscript available for the Greek original. This was deplored by the publisher Oporinus in his *Praefatio* only insofar as it would have been possible to correct the Latin translation in many places, and the Greek would have been especially helpful for the Turkish proper names in Turkish, because they could not be verified in other works.

Otherwise, the lack of a Greek version was not so important. To communicate the content matter to the reader, Latin alone was totally sufficient, and it was really Laonicus's work that was important for the potential commercial success of the *Corpus*, because it contained so much information about the relevant menacing enemy, the Ottomans. Therefore, Wolf in his *Praefatio*, which he finished in January 1559 (this part of the *Corpus* was published in Basel in 1562), did not grow tired of pointing to its political actuality and the possibility of reading it to learn from the mistakes committed by the Byzantines, which are painted by Wolf in the darkest colours. The emperors, so Wolf informs his readers as a result of his reading, in the exercise of their office were altogether uninterested and stupidly niggard when necessary expenditures were needed yet lavish on unnecessary expense. Civil wars were the order of the day; high officials and military officers were perfidious and made arbitrary decisions; the clergy were ignorant and quarrelled over vanities; the people were arrogant and faint-hearted; all social ranks perpetrated the most odious crimes. The Turks by contrast, displayed fidelity, bravery and clemency; their virtues were praised even by their enemies. From all this, so Wolf said, he deduced that the Turks were much more worthy of sovereignty than the Byzantines. Rather than feeling pity for them, he was astonished that this 'criminal human dross' ['*faex ac sentina*'] could hold their ground for such a long time, and had not been subjugated earlier than they were. The reading will benefit the public, according to Wolf, because people will be called to the defence of their homeland. 'Undoubtedly it is our affair, in fact it is our salvation that is at stake, now when the neighbouring wall is burning'.[28] These are the very last words of Wolf's *Praefatio*.

[28] 'Ad magnificum et generosum virum, D. Antonium Fuggerum', C: 'Res enim profecto, imo salus nostra nunc agitur, paries cum proximus ardet'.

Before the entire *Corpus* could be published, the publisher Oporinus had to overcome some financial difficulties. As before he was dependent on financing from the Fuggers, and in the past he had often been in default. But things moved quickly, because Anton Fugger, the senior member of the enterprise, died in 1560, and Johann Jakob, Wolf's former employer, had to take over the company. As a businessman he was a failure and in 1562 he became bankrupt, as far as his shares in the company were concerned. When Wolf had finished his manuscript in January 1559, he presented the Gregoras and the Latin translations of Laonicus, first to the aged Anton Fugger to get his placet and a grant for the printing costs. But the 'irascible old man',[29] as he is called by Wolf in one of his letters to Oporinus, did not arrive at a decision before his death in 1560. Perhaps one of the reasons for the Catholic Anton Fugger to procrastinate over this decision was that Wolf's publications from 1559 were indexed. But the general financial crisis, too, and the tensions between the Catholic family and Ulrich Fugger, the younger brother of Johann Jakob, who was the only Protestant and with whom Wolf stood in the years 1558–1562, may have played a part in this matter. The manuscript was finally released by the Fuggers in 1561, and in the December of that year Oporinus was paid an advance. The dedication of the *Corpus* to the Fuggers was the result of very delicate agreements between Wolf, Oporinus, Johannes Fugger (one of Anton's sons) and Ludwig Kiel. It was only when Anton's sons Marcus and Johannes had approved the whole work including the epilogue and the various poems giving thanks to the Fugger family that the printing could begin. It is quite clear that, even when Wolf had left the immediate service of Johann Jakob Fugger, the whole enterprise of the *corpus historiae Byzantinae* depended on the Fugger clan. The family members and their confidential clerk Hans Dernschwam had to be consulted for every single decision connected to the publishing of the book.

Oporinus tried to arouse the Fuggers's interest in further editions of Byzantine historians (George Cedrenus, George Pachymeres, Anna Comnena), but he could only undertake the editing of a Cedrenus, provided no longer by Hieronymus Wolf but by Wilhelm Holzmann (Xylander), published in Basel in 1566. He did not attempt another Byzantine text except a Latin translation of the Suda, published in Basel in 1564.

Of greater significance than Wolf as a philologist, and more gifted with a better sense of history, was David Hoeschel (1556–1617), his pupil at Saint Anna's Gymnasium in Augsburg and his successor as principal of the school.

[29] 'ὀξύθυμος γέρων'.

Hoeschel's patron was Markus Welser, the principal of Augsburg's second great business house, who was himself a humanist, historian and mayor of the town. He had founded the publishing house *Ad insigne pinus*, named after the pine cone in the city coat of arms. With this publisher, Hoeschel edited (with translations into Latin) many Byzantine authors and texts, among others Photius's *Bibliotheke* (1601), Constantine Porphyrogenitus's *Excerpta de legationibus* (1603), Procopius's *Bella* (1607) and Anna Comnena's *Alexiad* (1610). Unlike Wolf, he showed genuine interest in these Byzantine texts and he proved to be not only a very competent philologist but also a judicious historian. In his commentaries we do not find similar biased condemnations of the Byzantines as uttered by Wolf in the *Praefatio* of his Gregoras. We detect an entirely different attempt for historical understanding and scrupulous dealing with historical criticism. In my opinion, Hoeschel is the most important among German humanists who edited Byzantine texts. Together with Wolf, we can include other editors such as: Ludwig Kiel (Carinus) (1496–1569), Wilhelm Holzmann (Xylander) (1532–1576), Johannes Löwenklau (Leunclavius) (1541–1594) and Martin Kraus (Crusius) (1526–1607) in the early modern period.

If one would like to give relational designations to the pioneers of German Byzantinology, it would be to call Wolf the first yet not the most important among the ancestors and the exponents of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the grandfathers and uncles;[30] the title of the father, however, should be reserved for the Byzantinist Karl Krumbacher (1856–1909).

[30] By these antecedents I think of those other scholars who were also more or less Byzantinists to come from Germany in the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. They include: the Arabist and Greek scholar Johannes Jakob Reiske (1716–1774), the historian and specialist in oriental studies Friedrich Wilken (1777–1840), the classical philologist Gottlieb Lukas Friedrich Tafel (1787–1860), the philologist and historian Jakob Philipp Fallmerayer (1790–1861), the legal historian Karl Eduard Zachariae von Lingenthal (1812–1894), the historian Karl Hopf (1832–1873), the classical philologist and historian Heinrich Gelzer (1847–1906), the librarian Carl Gotthard de Boor (1848–1923) and the art historian Carl Neumann (1860–1934), to name just the most prominent.

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Chapter 3

The Second Rome as Seen by the Third: Russian Debates on 'the Byzantine legacy'

Sergey A. Ivanov[1]

Although Rus' coexisted with Byzantium for half a millennium, the importance of Byzantine influence on Russian culture should not be overestimated. How much could a young culture, which was taking shape in the vast expanse of Eastern Europe, borrow from an ancient civilization rooted in the traditions of Mediterranean culture, Roman statehood and Greek learning? Since the mid-eleventh century, Byzantium had been steadily diminishing in size for four hundred years, until it shrivelled to two small slivers of land. Muscovy emerged as a minuscule princedom at the beginning of the thirteenth century and grew steadily, until four hundred years later it became the largest country in the world. The Byzantines were very slowly relinquishing their (sometimes ungrounded) sense of superiority over the 'barbarians'. The Russians to this day cannot get rid of their (sometimes ungrounded) 'inferiority complex' in relation to the West. The emotional characteristics of Russian music, dance and clothing all have nothing in common with their Byzantine counterparts. Blueberries are as unheard of in the south as olive trees are in the north. A Greek would never have enjoyed pickled cabbage or home-brewed alcohol, while a Russian pilgrim in Constantinople vomited at the sight of the Greeks savouring traditional Byzantine seafood. A legend from the Russian Primary Chronicle sarcastically describes the bewilderment of the Apostle Andrew (who embodies a Byzantine here) at the Novgorodian bath customs: 'They warm them to extreme heat [...] they take young branches and lash their bodies. They actually lash themselves so violently that they barely escape alive. Then they drench themselves with cold water'.[2] On the other hand, Stephen of Novgorod, who undertook a

[1] National Research University 'Higher School of Economics', Moscow.

[2] *The Russian Primary Chronicle, Laurentian Text*, trans. S. Hazzard Cross and O. P. Sherbowitz-Wetzor (Cambridge, MA, 1953), 54.

pilgrimage to Constantinople in the fourteenth century, could think of no parallel to Constantinople except 'a great forest – it's impossible to get around without a good guide'.[3]

Given the difference between the two cultures, much of what had been borrowed was transformed and reinterpreted, often beyond recognition. This is often forgotten in the discussions of the 'Byzantine' nature of the Russian statehood. To give one obvious example, Constantine the Great was the only Byzantine emperor to become a saint, while Slavic princes were canonized quite frequently; the aforementioned Stephen of Novgorod describes numerous relics that he and his companions were fortunate enough to kiss and then adds, 'There are also many tsars' tombs there, and although [these emperors] are not saints, we, sinners, kissed [them]'.[4] The lessons the Russian visitors drew from Byzantium had nothing to do with the Byzantines themselves – Russian travellers saw in Constantinople what they wanted to see. They created their own, imaginary Byzantium.

In what follows I concentrate on how Muscovy and later Russia dealt with the image of the defunct empire rather than on the relationships between the still-existing Byzantium and early Rus'.[5] There are many Byzantium-related myths in the Russian public's perception. For example, today most people are convinced that the Russian national emblem, the double-headed eagle, is part of their Byzantine heritage and, specifically, that it was brought to Moscow by Zoe Palaiologina as her dowry to Ivan III. This marriage took place in 1472, while the double-headed eagle first appeared on the tsar's seal as late as 1497.[6] There are more reasons to believe that it was an imitation of the Austrian coat

[3] G. Majeska, *Russian Travellers to Constantinople in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (Washington DC, 1984), 44–5.

[4] Majeska, *Russian Travellers*, 42–3.

[5] The most important publications on the topic: E. Hösch, 'Byzanz und die Byzanzidee in der russischen Geschichte', *Saeculum*, 20 (1969), 6–17; D. Obolensky, 'Modern Russian Attitudes to Byzantium', *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinische Geselschaft*, 15 (1966), 61–72 [republished in: D. Obolensky, *Byzantium and the Slavs: Collected Studies* (London, 1971), 193–204]; J. Meyendorff, 'The Byzantine Impact on Russian Civilisation', *Windows on the Russian Past: Essays on Soviet Historiography since Stalin* (Columbus, OH, 1977), 45–56; M. Hellmann, 'Moskau und Byzanz', *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas. Neue Folge*, 17 (1969), 321–44; I. Ševčenko, 'Byzantium and the Eastern Slavs after 1453', *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, 2 (1978), 5–25; D. Frick, 'Sailing to Byzantium: Greek Texts and the Establishment of Authority in Early Modern Muscovy', *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, 19 (1995), 138–57.

[6] G. Alef, 'The Adoption of the Muscovite Two-headed Eagle: A Discordant View', *Speculum*, 41 (1966), 1–20; Н. А. Соболева and А. Н. Казакевич, *Символы и святыни Российской державы* (Moscow, 2006), 1883–916.

of arms. The idea that the Muscovite tsars had 'inherent' rights concerning the Byzantine legacy was formulated by the Venetians, who were anxious to find allies in their struggle against the Ottomans. This idea did not attract much interest among the Muscovites at the time. For example, while both the cities of Kiev and Vladimir had erected a Golden Gate emulating the one to be found in Constantinople, Moscow had not; Kiev and Novgorod had built their own St Sophia cathedrals symbolizing their imitation of the great Orthodox shrine – but Moscow had not.

It is true that Ivan IV the Terrible (1533–1584) called the Mongol khan's headgear,[7] with which he was crowned, 'the Monomakh's Cap' and played with some other symbols of Byzantium, but he showed much more passion in claiming to be a descendant of Augustus, and he would invoke the First Rome rather than the Second. As for religion, he used to say that 'our faith is not Greek but Christian'. Political thinkers of this period, for example Ivan Peresvetov, warned Ivan the Terrible against imitating the Byzantine *basileis* [emperors], who had lost their empire because they had ceded their prerogatives to their magnates.[8] The latter were scornfully labelled by the tsar 'these *hypatoi* [nobles or consuls] and *strategoi* [generals]'.[9] Generally speaking, Byzantium was viewed ultimately as a failure,[10] and nobody particularly cherished that pedigree. The same Peresvetov presented Mehmet the Conqueror as a true role model for the Muscovite tsar.

The idea of Moscow as 'the Third Rome' was formulated by the monk Filofei in a monastery near Pskov in the first half of the sixteenth century. Oceans of ink were spilt in discussing the concept, and it is not the goal of this chapter to add anything to that long discussion.[11] In this eschatological theory, Constantinople (the Second Rome) was transformed into a metaphor

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[7] Н. В. Жилина, *«Шапка Мономаха»: Историко-культурное и технологическое исследование* (Moscow, 2001).

[8] *Сочинения И. С. Пересветова*, ed. А. Зимин (Moscow and Leningrad, 1956), 151.

[9] *Послания Ивана Грозного*, ed. Д. С. Лихачев and Я. С. Лурье (Moscow and Leningrad, 1951), 30.

[10] И. Дуйчев, 'Византия и византийская литература в посланиях Ивана Грозного', *Труды Отдела Древнерусской Литературы*, 15 (1958), 159–76.

[11] For details and further literature see: Н. В. Синицына, *Третий Рим. Истоки и эволюция русской средневековой концепции* (Moscow, 1998); D. Rowland, 'Moscow – The Third Rome or the New Israel?', *Russian Review*, 55.4 (1996), 591–614; M. Poe, 'Moscow, the Third Rome: The Origins and Transformations of a "Pivotal Moment"', *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas, Neue Folge*, 49.3 (2001), 412–29. [Russian variant: М. По. Изобретение концепции, 'Москва – Третий Рим', *Ab Imperio*, 2 (2000), 61–86]; А. М. Ранчин, 'Теория «Москва – Тертий Рим» и ее место в русской культуре XVI–XVIII

that had little to do with the real Byzantium. The 'Third Rome' concept gained some popularity in 1589 when Moscow insisted on its right to have its own Patriarchate; later it was completely forgotten (except in the 'Old Believer' communities of the seventeenth century) until the 1860s, when Filofei's texts were first published and introduced into a completely different environment.

As a reservoir of historical precedents, Byzantium was alluded to in a variety of circumstances. For example, when Tsar Fyodor died in 1598 without a legitimate heir, a whole set of Byzantine cases were cited to justify Boris Godunov's claim to the throne; Basil I the Macedonian was excluded from the list when rumours began to circulate that Godunov had masterminded the assassination of Dimitrii, Tsar Fyodor's younger brother.[12] As the tsardom's international importance grew in the mid-seventeenth century, Byzantium was brought back to the fore as an imperial role model:[13] the Byzantine *Epanagoge* was translated; and the oracles that predicted the Russian destiny to liberate Constantinople were chanted by complaisant Greeks for the Tsar Alexei. The tsar assumed some regalia from Byzantium: for example, he ordered that an orb and a diadem be brought to him from Constantinople, manufactured 'after the fashion of the pious Greek Tsar Constantine';[14] during the coronation of his son Fyodor, the tsar took communion at the altar according to the priest's rite, as the *basileis* had done; the tsar's name began to be mentioned during the liturgy the way it had been done in Byzantium – and yet, the borrowing of disparate and superficial elements of the imperial ideology and practice failed to draw Muscovite tsardom any closer to Byzantium: the Russian subjects of Alexei regarded his conduct as a blasphemous appropriation of sacral functions.[15]

Peter the Great had an aversion for the defunct empire simply because of its inefficiency. After him, the Byzantine paradigm became irrelevant. The first

вв', 4 December 2011, at http://www.portal-slovo.ru/philology/44938.php?PRINT=Y (last accessed 19 January 2012).

[12] Б. Н. Флоря, 'Византийская историческая традиция и избрание Бориса Годунова на русский трон', *XVIII International Congress of Byzantine Studies: Summaries of Communications*, vol. 1 (Moscow, 1991), 326–7.

[13] See В. Г.Ченцова, 'Писец Николай Армириот и Крест царя Константина: к истории связей Ватопедского монастыря с Россией в XVII в', *Palaeoslavica*, XIX, 2 (2011), 60–109, with the pertinent bibliography on 60.

[14] Е. Барсов, *Древнерусские памятники священного венчания царей на царство в связи с греческими их оригиналами, с историческим очерком чинов царского венчания в связи с развитием идеи царя на Руси* (Moscow, 1883), 138.

[15] В. М. Живов and Б. А. Успенский, 'Царь и Бог (семиотические аспекты сакрализации монарха в России)', in Б. Успенский, *Избранные труды*, vol. 1 (Moscow, 1996), 221–30, 234, 239, 258.

to revive the notion of Byzantium was Catherine the Great. She cherished a special 'Greek Plan' to crush the Ottoman Empire and to reinstate Byzantium under Russian protection. The empress even named her second grandson Constantine as the first step in placing him on the throne of the future, new Byzantium. But such plans proved to be short lived (between 1768 and 1789),[16] and Byzantium fell into oblivion once again.

The Byzantine question reappeared in the nineteenth century, when the Russian elite became aware of Russia's uncertain status among the civilizations of the world. Yet the tone of the discussion had changed: in 1836 the philosopher Pyotr Chaadaev, in his 'Philosophical Letters', asserted that the very choice made by Rus' in favour of Constantinople, not Rome, had rendered inevitable the misfortune of Russia: 'Poussés par une destinée fatale, nous allions chercher dans la misérable Byzance, objet du profond mépris de ces peuples, le code moral qui devait faire notre éducation' ['Driven by a baneful fate, we turned to Byzantium, wretched and despised by nations, for a moral code that was to become the basis of our education'].[17] This was the opening of the debate that has continued until today without any substantial variations in its terms or arguments. Alexander Pushkin, the great Russian poet, and friend of Chaadaev, wrote a response to his 'Philosophical Letter', in which he defended Russia's choice and Russia's right to be different from the rest of Europe. Ironically, he wrote it in French, as was the norm among the Russian aristocracy: 'Vous dites [...] que Byzance était méprisable et méprisée etc. – hé, mon ami! [...] Nous avons pris des Grecs l'évangile et les traditions, et non l'esprit de puérilité et de controverse. Les mœurs de Byzance n'ont jamais été celles de Kiov' ('You say [...] that Byzantium was contemptible and condemned – well now, my friend! [...] We have taken the Gospel and traditions from the Greeks, but not the spirit of puerility and controversy. The customs of Byzantium were never those of Kiev').[18] Of course, in their perception of Byzantium both correspondents relied not only on Gibbon, not only on Montesquieu and Voltaire, but on the general Western frame of reference.

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[16] For more details see А. Зорин, *Кормя двуглавого орла [...] Литература и государственная идеология в последней трети XVIII – первой трети XIX века* (Moscow, 2001), 43–62, 125, 131.

[17] П. Я. Чаадаев, *Полное собрание сочинений*, vol. 1 (Moscow, 1991), 97; compare the English translation in P. Chaadaev, *Philosophical Letters and Apology of a Madman*, trans. and introduced by Mary-Barbara Zeldin (Knoxville, TN, 1969), 42.

[18] А. С.Пушкин, *Полное собрание сочинений. Т10. Письма 1831–1837* (Moscow, 1962), 154 [English translation: *The Letters of Alexander Pushkin*, trans. J. Thomas Shaw (Madison, WI, 1967), 779–80].

The debate could not proceed freely, since the tsar was irritated with Chaadaev's letter: the journal where it was published was immediately closed, its editor exiled, and Chaadaev himself was placed under house arrest for many years. As for Pushkin, he refrained from sending his answer, which would 'parrot' the official persecution. Pushkin left the letter in his archive, having written on it, 'A falcon does not peck out another falcon's eye';[19] Chaadaev remained inconsolable until the end of his life. Many years after his philosophical treatise, he insisted in a private letter: 'We, who steadily follow the footsteps of Byzantium, know only too well what it means when the spiritual power is left at the mercy of the secular rulers'.[20]

Byzantium as an empire once again gained importance in the middle of the nineteenth century. When the notorious Jakob Fallmerayer enunciated his theory regarding the Slavicization of the Balkans in Byzantine times, he wanted to warn the West against the 'Russian menace'; the Russophobic nature of his theory notwithstanding, the new trend of thought in Russia, the so-called Slavophiles used it to substantiate their claim to the Byzantine legacy. The earliest Slavophile and the great Russian poet Fyodor Tyutchev had many conversations with Fallmerayer in Munich 'de fatis byzantinis', as the latter notes in his diary, in which he also briefly recorded Tyutchev's ideas: 'Byzanz Heilige Stadt. Pruritus Rezidenz zu verlegen'.[21] For Tyutchev, as for the other 'Slavophiles', Constantinople was a 'natural' goal,[22] but it was not an end in itself: in his poem 'Prophesy' (1850) Tyutchev implored the Russian tsar: 'And the vaults of ancient Sophia / In resurrected Byzantium / Will again shelter the altar of Christ. / Throw yourself down in front of it, oh, Tsar of Russia, / And rise as the Tsar of all the Slavs'.[23] The fact that the outbreak of the Crimean War in 1853 coincided with the 400th anniversary of the Fall of Byzantium inspired a new upswing of imperialistic dreams. The poet Apollon Maikov

[19] *The Letters of Alexander Pushkin*, 797.

[20] П. Я. Чаадаев, *Полное собрание сочинений*, vol. 2 (Moscow, 1991), 189–90. One of Chaadaev's correspondents, French diplomat Adolphe de Circourt, tried to console his friend: he said that the Slavs adopted Christianity before the Photian schism and, therefore, Russian Orthodoxy grows from the same root as the Western Catholicism; for him, Russia diverted from its path only under Ivan the Terrible, this 'pervert heir of the Macedonian dynasty', Чаадаев, *Полное собрание сочинений*, vol. 2, 485–6.

[21] Е. Казанович, 'Из мюнхенских встреч Ф. И. Тютчева (1840-е гг.)', *Урания. Тютчевский альманах* (Leningrad, 1928), 151–3; G. von Rauch, 'J. P. Fallmerayer und der russische Reichsgedanke bei F. I. Tjutčev,' *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteropas Neue Folge*, 1, (1953), 68.

[22] Ф. И. Тютчев, *Политические статьи* (Paris, 1976), 18.

[23] Ф. И. Тютчев, *Полное собрание стихотворений* (Leningrad, 1987), 162.

wrote: 'Let everyone know that the dream of Christian Byzantium is still alive in Russia!'[24]

There were two facets to the Russian debate on the Byzantine legacy: the political one dealt with the fate of Constantinople and the Orthodox Christians after the imminent demise of the Ottoman Empire. Some, like Fyodor Dostoevsky, insisted that 'Constantinople must become Russian';[25] others thought that it should become the capital of a Pan-Slavic federation.[26] Saltykov-Shchedrin, a great Russian satirist of the second half of the nineteenth century, mocked the Russian obsession with Byzantium in 'The History of a Town'. Yet, this discussion on the fate of Constantinople seemed exciting and flattering to wide circles of learned society, especially in the 1870s, when a successful war with Turkey brought Russian troops to the very outskirts of Istanbul.[27]

The other aspect of the Byzantine debate concerned domestic issues: is Russia a unique civilization, with only one predecessor, Byzantium, or is it part of Europe? When the famous German historian Zacharia von Lingenthal proposed a theory that the Byzantine peasant commune had been a Slavic innovation, this hypothetical construct was enthusiastically embraced by the Slavophiles.[28] However, not everybody in Russia regarded the Slavic 'link' as indispensable. Konstantin Leontiev, a diplomat and philosopher, despised the Slavs and adored Byzantium. He used it as a symbol of theocracy, which he then offered as a model for emulation. 'Byzantium gave us all our strength', he wrote. 'Under its banner we shall withstand the onslaught of the entire Europe if indeed it dares impose on us the rot and

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[24] А. Н. Майков, 'Памяти Державина', *Полное собрание сочинений*, vol. 4 (St Petersburg, 1901), 284.

[25] Ф. М. Достоевский, *Собрание сочинений в 15 томах*, vol. 14 (St Petersburg, 1995), 74–6.

[26] Н. Я. Данилевский, *Россия и Европа* (St Petersburg, 1871), 388.

[27] Yet we should bear in mind that the 'common people' did not share the eschatological and imperialistic aspirations of the elite: a country gentleman named Alexander Engelgart noted in his diary that in 1877, at the pinnacle of the Constantinopolitan hysteria in the Russian press, the peasants in his village were praying in church to 'Tsar'grad'; at first, the nobleman decided that they too were imbued with patriotic fervour, but it turned out that it was in fact a case of homonymy: 'grad' in Russian means not only 'city' but also 'hailstorm' – so the peasants, in a pagan manner, implored 'King-Hail' not to nip their crops! See А. Н. Энгельгардт, *Из деревни. 12 писем 1877–1887 гг.* (St Petersburg, 1999), 210.

[28] И. П. Медведев and Т. Н. Таценко, 'Письма К. Э. Цахариэ фон Лингенталя в архиве А. Ф. Куника', *Архивы русских византинистов в Санкт-Петербурге* (St Petersburg, 1995), 398–9.

filth of its prescriptions for an earthly paradise'.[29] Of course, he knew next to nothing about Byzantium – to him it was but an ideal construct. In his book *Byzantism and Slavdom*, which has been highly respected, praised and criticized ever since its publication in 1875, Byzantium proper is mentioned just a few times. Yet Leontiev was the first to coin the term 'Byzantism' (as opposed to 'Byzantinism'), which became commonly used by the admirers of the Empire as a label for a benign tyranny. As a counterbalance, another new coinage, 'византийщина', emerged as the equivalent of the Western derogatory epithets, such as the German 'Byzantinismus' or the French 'Byzantiner'. The debate about the Byzantine legacy involved prominent public figures, such as Alexander Herzen, who condemned Byzantium for its 'debility',[30] as well as Vladimir Soloviev[31] and Vasilii Rozanov. Rozanov, one of the greatest and most original thinkers of the Russian 'Silver Age', objected to Leontiev's utopian constructs; his observations were so sharp that they are worth quoting at some length:

> When, in what epoch were we particularly imbued with Byzantine principles? Wouldn't everyone agree that it was during the time when Moscow was building the Russian state? But if that is so, why did we absorb these principles not during the period of our child-like receptiveness when Byzantium was alive and close to us, but at the time of our distrustful seclusion when Byzantium had already fallen? [...] Don't the Byzantine origins of the Muscovite way of life represent a phenomenon that is far more illusory than real? [...] So when Byzantium was transformed from a powerful and attractive empire into a slave of Islam [...] – that's when we want Russia to be imbued with the principles of Byzantium. Isn't that an illusion? Aren't we ascribing to the imitation our deeply original and unique aspects? [...] Sophisticated and depraved Byzantium that mixed abstract disputes of theological and philosophical nature with orgies, with the noise and debauchery of the circus, can hardly be seriously regarded as an antecedent and prototype for Muscovy – morosely silent, stubbornly persistent, far more forceful than devious, so universally unrefined in its thought, taste and emotional inclinations.[32]

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[29] К. Леонтьев, *Собрание сочинений*. 5 (Moscow, 1912), 137.

[30] А. И. Герцен, *Собрание сочинений в 30-ти томах*, vol. 6 (Moscow, 1955), 232.

[31] В. Соловьев, *Византизм и Россия: Спор о справедливости* (Moscow and Kharkiv, 1999), 663–701.

[32] В. В. Розанов, 'Эстетическое понимание истории// Константин Леонтьев', *Pro et Contra*, vol. 1 (St Petersburg, 1995), 117–18.

Never afraid of internal contradictions, Rozanov in his later writings embraced the idea that Byzantium in fact did play a great role in Russian history, but that its role was negative: 'Has the millennium of Byzantism in Russia done any good? One can answer with one's hand on one's heart: no, it has not! Then be consistent and help liberate Russia from the yoke of Byzantism'.[33]

As the Russian Empire entered the twentieth century, Russian Byzantinism was at its peak: the conquest of the Straits (Bosphoros/Dardanelles) and the erection of a cross over St Sophia were the prime goals of Russian foreign policy. The public sentiments of the time can be illustrated by the fact that in 1912, a young Osip Mandelshtam, whose family tradition barely had any connection with the imperial Orthodox yearnings – he was a Jew who had recently moved with his parents from Poland to St Petersburg – wrote enthusiastic poems about Sophia of Constantinople:

1.
Hagia Sophia – here to stop and stare
The Lord has ordered people and the tsars!
Your dome, as an eyewitness once described it,
As if by chains is hanging from the stars.

2.
To all a shining light – age of Justinian,
When to steal off for foreign gods unseen
Dedicated Diana the Ephesian
Hundred and seven marble columns green.

3.
To what aspired your generous creator,
When high in spirit and in reason blessed,
He laid your features on the ground
And pointed them directions east and west?

[33] В. В. Розанов, *Около церковных стен*, vol. 1 (St Petersburg, 1906), 344. Compare another of Rozanov's invectives against Byzantium: 'Les Byzantines fiernt une affair de principe du motif particulier de leur querelle avec les papes [...] Se décomposant, se mourant, Byzance insinua à la Russie toutes ses fureurs et ses gémissements d'avant la mort [...] La Russie, au chevet de l'agonisante, s'hypnotisea de ses lamentations [...] et elle jura à mourante de hair à mort les peuples d'Occident', V. Rozanov, *L'eglise russe* (Paris, 1912), 8–9.

4.
The temple shines, in the world's aura bathing,
And forty windows – triumph of the light;
On sails under the dome the four archangels
Finest of all and basking in delight.

5.
This building will outlast people and ages
So wise and spherical and nobly built
And incandescent weeping of the angels
Will not corrode away the darkened gilt.[34]

The idea that Russia itself was the reincarnation of Byzantium was most graphically reflected in the architectural style referred to as 'Byzantine'. This emerged in the second half of the nineteenth century and reached its peak in the first decade of the twentieth century, when 40 'Byzantine' cathedrals were completed all across the Russian Empire as well as beyond Russian borders: in Greece, in Bulgaria, and even in France and Germany (in Biarritz and Kissingen). The most ostentatious and grand among them was the Naval Cathedral of St Nicholas in Kronstadt, whose similarity to Hagia Sophia of Constantinople, both in its exterior and interior decorations, is striking (see Figure 3.1).

Byzantine Studies was one of the pillars of the Russian humanities. In Turkey, the Russian Archaeological Institute in Constantinople held a leading position among that city's European academic institutions. Naturally, the vast majority of scholars involved in Byzantine Studies were monarchists or at least conservatives. The only republican among them was Pavel Bezobrazov,[35] whose book about Michael Psellos was a veiled critique of the Russian imperial bureaucracy.[36] This tradition of 'Aesopian language', talking of Byzantium but implying Russia, was later used by Soviet Byzantinists (cf. infra).

[34] О. Э. Мандельштам, *Стихотворения* (Moscow, 1992), 17; Osip Mandelstam, *Tristia*, trans. Ilya Shambat, at http://lib.ru/POEZIQ/MANDELSHTAM/tristia_engl.txt (last accessed 10 January 2012).

[35] The unjustified contention was that Bezobrazov hated Byzantium – compare С. Жебелев, 'Предисловие', in П. Безобразов, *Очерки византийской культуры* (Petrograd, 1919), 1 – he authored a couple of novels set in Byzantium – e.g., *Жених двух невест* (Moscow, 1894) – that reveal his deep sympathy for the Byzantines.

[36] Я. Н. Любарский, 'О Павле Владимировиче Безобразове и его книге о Михаиле Пселле', in *Две книги о Михаиле Пселле* (St Petersburg, 2001), 10.

Figure 3.1 Naval Cathedral of Saint Nicholas in Kronstadt
Source: Alex Florstein (file licensed under Creative Commons).

The outbreak of World War I further spurred public debate. In 1915, the leading Byzantinist Fyodor Uspenskii submitted to Tsar Nicholas II a memo detailing the urgent steps to be taken after the Russian takeover of Constantinople.[37] In the same year, Archbishop Antonii Khrapovitskii, one of Russia's most influential clerics (he was the first contender for the Patriarchate) published a plea for the restoration of the Byzantine Empire in its original borders[38] – in a sense, his dreams were even bolder than the appetites of the 'Megali Idea'. Yet the official position on Istanbul was less favourable to the Greeks. On 3 March 1915, Tsar Nicholas II told the French ambassador (whose name, ironically, was Paleologue), 'The city of Constantinople and southern Thrace must be annexed to my Empire'.[39] After the Entente Cordiale accepted his claim, the capture of Tsar'grad looked imminent. On Christmas

[37] Л. Герд. 'Еще один проект «русского Константинополя». Записка Ф. И. Успенского 1915 г', *Вспомогательные исторические дисциплины* 30 (St Petersburg, 2007), 424–33.

[38] Архиепископ Антоний, *Чей должен быть Константинополь?* (Kharkiv, 1915).

[39] Г. М. Левицкий, 'Николай Второй и византийская мечта', *Самиздат*, 13 November 2011, at http://samlib.ru/l/lewickij_g_m/nikolaj.shtml (last accessed 28 January 2012).

Day, 1916, the mystical poet Vyacheslav Ivanov implored, 'Oh Rus', when you wrap yourself in the purple robes of Tsar'grad, do not serve worldly interests'.[40]

The February revolution of 1917 did not stop the imperial hysteria; instead, the Byzantine question became even more acute. In the atmosphere of overwhelming uncertainty after the fall of the monarchy, some theologians blamed Byzantium for excessive gnosticism and asceticism, which, in their minds, were later planted into the Russian psyche.[41]

The Bolsheviks who came to power in October 1917 could not have cared less about Byzantium, but those on the other side of the barricades did not forget about it: the abrupt collapse of the formidable edifice of the Russian Empire compelled religious and political thinkers to search for the roots of this catastrophe. The famous theologian Sergii Bulgakov, for example, blamed Byzantium for the loneliness of the Russian culture, which made it vulnerable to pernicious influences:

> Together with Christianity, at that fateful moment Russia also adopted all Byzantine insularity and its constraints; it became separated from the whole Western, Christian Europe by a "Great Wall" and remained isolated [...] Meanwhile, Byzantium's attitude towards Russia was never sincere or warm, but always arrogant and hollow-hearted.[42]

Bulgakov's book *At the Walls of Chersonnesos*, written at the end of the brutal Civil War, in the atmosphere of terror and despair, was all about Byzantium and its legacy, as if they were the primary concerns of the time. The writer Alexei Tolstoy, one of the Russian émigrés in Constantinople in 1920, describes the bitter disappointment of a White-Guard officer in this deceptive imperial dream: 'Byzantium, may it go to hell! So much of our Russian blood has been spilled for this damn Byzantium. It's the usual Russian stupidity all over again!'[43]

To the Bolsheviks, Byzantium was one of the attributes of tsarism; more generally, for people of the new, avant-garde era, it became a symbol of everything dilapidated, moth-eaten and dusty. From the late 1920s through to the late 1930s, the very word 'Byzantine' was banned and was used only

[40] В. Иванов, 'Буди, буди!', *Собрание сочинений*, vol. 4 (Brussels, 1987), 51. See more details in J. Kalb. *Russia's Rome: Imperial Visions, Messianic Dreams, 1890–1940* (Princeton, NJ, 2009), 148.

[41] М. М. Тареев, 'Новое богословие', *Богословский вестник* (1917), 219–24.

[42] С. Булгаков, *У стен Херсониса* (St Petersburg, 1993), 12–13.

[43] А. Н. Толстой, 'Остров Халки', in А. Н. Толстой, *Собрание сочинений*, vol. 3 (Leningrad, 1958), 298.

in quotation marks. Byzantine scholars became the targets of repressions; Vladimir Beneshevich, the most prominent among them, was executed.

However, some 10 years later, Stalin's imperial renaissance began, and Byzantium gradually made its return. In 1943, Byzantine Studies were reinstated by an administrative order. The Soviet leadership also revived the imperial ambitions of tsarist Russia: in 1946, Stalin laid territorial claims on Turkey. By 1947, the Byzantine renaissance in the USSR had reached its peak and then declined.[44]

Gradually, the Communist regime eased its ideological rigour, and many of the earlier bans were lifted: what had been unthinkable became possible. For example, from the mid-1960s an Orthodox Christian revival of sorts was unfolding in the USSR under the guise of an interest in the old culture. The most well-known symbol of the religious revival was Andrey Tarkovsky's film *Andrei Roublev* (1966). Suddenly, the Soviet people developed an interest in icons or the church architecture of Old Rus', and Byzantium also benefited from this new passion. Between 1969 and 1971, the great Soviet Byzantinist Sergey Averintsev was invited to hold a course on Byzantine aesthetics at the Moscow State University. His lectures became a true sensation: hundreds of people stormed the auditorium; it was standing-room only. Suddenly, this esoteric subject became so ideologically charged that the authorities finally banned the course as 'religious propaganda' (which indeed it was).[45] Between 1975 and 1977, an enormous exhibition, 'Byzantine Art in Soviet Collections', was organized in Leningrad and Moscow. At the State Hermitage, 'the spaces allocated for the exhibit included the Throne Hall [...] of the Winter Palace. The solemn ceremonial nature of the decor [...] emphasized the imperial character of Byzantine art. The organizers had no intention to compare the two empires [...] but the comparison was made nevertheless'.[46] Viktor Lazarev, a prominent art historian and a renowned expert on Byzantine art, was awarded the State Prize in 1976. Novels were written in which Byzantium was depicted with sympathy. In a children's book published at that time the main character, a slave from Rus', is converted to Christianity by Andrew the Fool.[47]

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[44] For more details, see my article: S. Ivanov, 'Byzance rouge: la byzantinologie et les communistes (1928–1948)', in M.-F. Auzépy, ed., *Byzance en Europe* (Paris, 2003), 55–60.

[45] Р. Гальцева. 'Опыт словарной статьи о Сергее Аверинцеве', *Mesembria. Българо-руски сборник в чест на Сергей Аверинцев* (Sophia, 1999), 162.

[46] Y. Pyatnitsky, 'An Imperial Eye to the Past: Byzantine Exhibitions in the State Hermitage Museum, 1861–2006', *Tyragetia* (2011), N4, 85.

[47] Ю. П. Вронский, *Необычайные приключения Кукши из Домовичей* (Moscow, 1974).

Sometimes, the religious revival assumed even riskier forms: some Western publications on Byzantium were circulating in *samizdat*, i.e. they were translated, typewritten and distributed secretly by zealots. This was the case with John Meyendorff's book on Palamas,[48] which caused an enormous surge of interest in hesychasm among Russian Orthodox Christians; this interest still survives today. Meyendorff himself met with a group of 'anti-Soviet' priests during his visit to Moscow in 1979; this encounter was monitored by the KGB, and later the American protopresbyter Meyendorff was slandered in the Soviet press as a subversive element.[49]

Yet it was not just the Byzantine religion that attracted the public's attention. The very nature of a despotic, ideologically charged power in Byzantium evoked familiar associations for people in Soviet society even against their will.[50] Reading about Byzantium, Soviet intellectuals would exchange conspiratorial glances, while their ideological overseers were shaking with impotent rage. Such links between the past and the present are, of course, inevitable whether we like them or not, but under Soviet conditions any hint seemed political, and all political hints were charged with a strong, almost erotic tension. Konstantin Leontiev could only dream of the return of 'Byzantism' to Russia; *homo sovieticus* regarded Byzantium as a kind of cobweb-covered historic mirror in which he could discern his own likeness.[51] The aforementioned Sergey Averintsev, while listening to a communist functionary speaking at an official event, whispered to a colleague sitting next to him, 'When Byzantine authors argue among themselves, it is difficult to understand the subject of their argument. We are better equipped to understand this than Western Byzantinists'.[52]

Joseph Brodsky expressed these feelings in his 1985 essay 'Flight from Byzantium'. The title is obviously an ironic allusion to Yeats's 'Sailing to Byzantium'. The *émigré* poet poured out his visceral hatred for the totalitarian

[48] И. Мейендорф, *Жизнь и труды святителя Григория Паламы* (St Petersburg, 1997), 354–5.

[49] Н. Домбковский, 'Крест на совести', *Труд*, 10–11 April 1986, at http://www.portal-credo.ru/site/?act=news&id=45968 (last accessed 29 September 2014).

[50] This approach was also shared by some respectable British Byzantinists – see A. Toynbee, 'Russia's Byzantine Heritage', in *Civilization on Trial* (New York, 1948), 166–73, 182–3 and R. J. H. Jenkins, *Byzantium and Byzantinism* (Cincinnati, OH, 1963) – but for them anticommunism was, alas, inalienable from British imperialism.

[51] However, the regime's own ideas concerning its Byzantine roots changed with the course of time, cf. I. Ševčenko, 'Byzantine Cultural Influences', in C. Blace, ed., *Rewriting Russian History 2nd edition* (New York, 1962), 160–89.

[52] М. Л. Гаспаров, *Записи и выписки* (Moscow, 2000), 167.

Soviet Union on the ancient empire. That essay was egregiously unfair towards Byzantium. Brodsky did not even pretend to think in historical terms – he does not hide his subjectivity. He wrote: 'Rus' received or took everything from Byzantium's hands: not only the Christian liturgy but also the Christian–Turkish system of statecraft [...] What distinguishes the General Secretary from [...] the Emperor?'[53] It was both unjust and superficial, but this misconception was shared even by the great Alexander Kazhdan;[54] the difference in competence was overwhelmed by the commonness of personal experience.

The fall of Communism lifted all restrictions and cleared space for historical–philosophical discussions, which until then had had to resort to the language of allegory. Certain schools of thought began to blame Russia's troubles on Byzantium: one neo-pagan author wrote, 'Byzantium continued to force "Christianization" upon freedom-loving tribes. The "Christian", slave-holding Byzantium, perennially hostile to freedom-loving Russia, attacked Russia itself and set the nomads of the Steppe against it'.[55] This view was held by a minority, though. Byzantium was extolled primarily by anti-Western, anti-liberal thinkers. The first to take this stand was the essayist Vadim Kozhinov, who had to conceal his views during the Communist period, yet in the 1990s he could finally speak his mind. In his book *The History of Russia and the Russian Word*, he writes, 'the West loathed Russia not only because Russia was an ideocratic state; the West was averse to the Eurasian nature of the Byzantine Empire [...] Russia was the only state to inherit the Eurasian nature of Byzantium'.[56] Thus, Kozhinov brands Byzantium a 'Eurasian' state. The same idea was expounded by Alexander Dugin, the chief ideologist of the so-called 'Neo-Eurasianism'. Dugin writes:

> Our most solid foundation is Byzantium. Russia is Byzantium. Our formula is: the West is evil, Byzantium is good. Everything bad written about Byzantium is a lie. This is but ideological tricks used by the West in its ideological contest. Every Russian must know that Byzantium is pure good. Anyone who claims otherwise is an enemy. If you criticize Byzantium, you are an enemy of

[53] J. Brodsky, *Less Than One* (New York, 1986), 437–8. On the paradoxes of Brodsky's approach see N. Kovačević, 'Shifting Topographies of Eastern/Central/Europe in Joseph Brodsky's and Czeslaw Milosz's Prose Writing', in *Narrating Post/Communism Colonial Discourse and Europe's Borderline Civilisation* (Abingdon, 2008), 52–60.

[54] A. Kazhdan, 'Byzantium: The Emperor's New Clothes?', *History Today*, 39 (September, 1989), 26–34.

[55] А. В. Трехлебов, *Клич Феникса* (Glazov, 1997), 64.

[56] В. В. Кожинов, *От Византии до Орды. История Руси* (Moscow, 2004), 54.

> the Russian people. This must be our iron-clad direction. The direction to Byzantium. Byzantium is an absolute guiding line of the Russian project, our reference point in history. This is secure and firm. This is central. Byzantine fell when it started having doubts about its own rightness.[57]

The myth of a special, Eurasian, way for Russia was first formulated in the 1920s by a group of *émigré* academics and was picked up in the 1990s by a group of political philosophers in Russia. It should be noted that the founding fathers of this school of thought did not focus on Byzantium. Today's 'Neo-Eurasianists', however, have their own opponents, 'Byzantists' (Leontiev's term). One of them, Alexander Eliseev, defended Byzantium from a racist standpoint:

> Byzantium as the second Rome was the greatest Aryan Christian state, and drawing the (public) attention to its historical experience may become a powerful weapon for the Russian nationalist revolution, Orthodox and conservative. We, the Russians, as descendants of the Aryans, are closely related to these civilizations. Today we urgently need our own "Byzantinization".[58]

Vladimir Putin's ascent to power in 2000 marked the failure of the ideology of political liberalism in Russia. After the collapse of the liberal reforms of the 1990s, it soon became clear that Russia could not and would not join the West; it re-embarked on a search for a national identity. Meanwhile, the rise of radical Islam shattered the illusion of a 'Eurasian' Russia. The country was once again floating between the earth and the sky, without a nationally shared frame of reference, guidelines or precedents. It is not an accident that, since the beginning of that decade, Byzantium again became increasingly popular in public discourse. Consider these two quotes from the media: 'Maybe, Byzantium is not only Russia's past but also Russia's future',[59] and 'Russia is Byzantium. It has been, it still is, and it will always remain Byzantium'.[60]

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[57] А. Дугин, *Абсолют византизма*, at http://arctogaia.com/public/vizantism.htm (last accessed 19 January 2012), compare С. В. Селиверстов, 'Византийский мир в евразийском дискурсе: «свой» или «чужой»?', in В. Я. Баркалов and А. В. Иванов, eds, *Евразийство: теоретический потенциал и практическое приложение* (Barnaul, 2009), 111–16.

[58] А. Елисеев, 'Византизм как орудие национальной революции', at http://nationalism.org/eliseev/vizantizm.htm (last accessed 28 January 2012).

[59] Д. Сапрыкин, 'Вернуть Византию!', *Русский Журнал*, 26 June 2001, at http://old.russ.ru/politics/20010626.html (last accessed 28 January 2012).

[60] М. Кожокин. 'Византийское прошлое – европейское будущее', *Отечественные записки*, 4 (2003), 165.

Liberals used the Byzantine example to illustrate the sad fate of autocracy, bureaucracy and the omnipotence of ideology;[61] however, not only religious zealots[62] and right-wing conservatives but even the Communists presented the defunct empire as a model for imitation. In 2004, the leader of the Communist Party, Gennadii Zyuganov, published an article entitled 'The Bequest of Byzantium'.[63]

Around the same time, a concept of 'Neobyzantism' was introduced in an attempt to build upon the ideas of Leontiev[64] and others. Let us see how many times Byzantium was mentioned in the Russian press from 1995 to 2008 (the first number shows citations from the national media, the second one from the regional media): 1995: 12/2; 1996: 60/24; 1997: 125/93; 1998: 159/100; 1999: 183/158; 2000: 279/310; 2001: 291/269; 2002: 325/207; 2003: 440/375; 2004: 543/524; 2005: 464/532; 2006: 637/642; 2007: 595/589; 2008: 762/705.[65]

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[61] А. Курчаткин, 'Урок 550-летней давности', *Русский журнал*, 30 May 2003, at old.russ.ru/ist_sovr/20030530_kur.html (last accessed 29 January 2012).

[62] When the Moscow Patriarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church reunited with the breakaway 'Karlovac Church' of Russian expatriates in 2007, the event brought about comments such as this: 'The reunification of the Church happened largely thanks to the impetus provided by President V. Putin, who acted as a [...] successor to other sovereigns who (were) healing schisms. Putin became the imitator of emperors Constantine the Great, Pulcheria, Marcian, Justinian, and other secular rulers who were glorified for their efforts to overcome church splits'. See С. Антоненко, 'Подвиг воссоединения', *Родина*, 6 (2007), at http://www.istrodina.com/rodina_articul.php3?id=2207&n=112 (last accessed 29 January 2012).

[63] Г. Зюганов, *О России и русских* (Moscow, 2004), 40–43.

[64] Р. Устьян, *Византизм и евразийство как геополитические стратегии развития России в XXI веке* (Moscow, 2000); И. Б. Чернова. *Религиозный аспект византизма и русская национальная духовность. Дисс.* (Rostov, 2000); Г. В. Скотинина, *Византийская традиция в русском самосознании* (St Petersburg, 2002); Г. В. Скотинина, *Византийская традиция и русская культура* (St Petersburg, 2002); М. Ю. Грыжанова, *Социально-философская концепция раннего византизма* (Saransk, 2003); А. Малер, 'Идеология Византизма' *Северный Катехон*, 1 (2005), 7–49; А. Малер, 'Социальная доктрина неовизантизма', *Русская Народная линия*, 26 August 2005, at http://ruskline.ru/monitoring_smi/2005/08/26/social_naya_doktrina_neovizantizma/ (last accessed 19 January 2012); Н. М. Северикова, 'Византизм вчера и завтра', *Философские науки*, 12 (2006), 86–98; А. Малер, 'Северная Византия', *Православная беседа*, 2 (2007), В. В. Исаева, *Византийская традиция понимания человека в русской религиозной философии* (Tver, 2006); А. Бородина, *Византинизм* (Moscow, 2007); О. Р. Естрина, *Византизм* (Volgograd, 2007); Т. Д. Катина, *Влияние культуры Византии на становление отечественной духовности* (Tver, 2007).

[65] My count is based on data from the INTEGRUM database, at http://www.integrumworld.com/doc/videomanual/index.html (last accessed 19 January 2012).

On 30 December 2007, the Russian state security service, FSB, celebrated its 90th anniversary; the FSB takes pride in succeeding the Soviet secret police, the CheKa founded by Lenin in 1917. Speaking at the ceremony at his agency's headquarters (the infamous Lubyanka), Nikolay Patrushev, the FSB Director, did not content himself with this short line of succession: 'Students of history know that security was an issue in the old days as well. Sofia Palaiologina married Ivan III and, as a niece of the last Byzantine emperor, she took security issues very seriously'.[66]

It was in this context that, in February 2008, the nationwide government television channel aired a pseudo-documentary called *The Destruction of an Empire: The Lesson of Byzantium*.[67] The film was directed and presented by the Dean of the Moscow Sretensky Monastery, Tikhon Shevkunov, who is rumoured to be Putin's personal confessor.

The film was a fantasy with crude factual errors and flagrant distortions; it was filled with a virulent hatred for the West. It was not the Turks but mainly the West that destroyed the thousand-year-old empire. The film made numerous broad allusions to the hot political issues of the day. For instance, Emperor Basil II was an obvious prototype of Putin. The film had plenty of modern Russian parlance, such as 'the vertical of power', 'the Stabilization fund' or 'oligarchs'. Although Shevkunov himself is a cleric, the religious aspect of Byzantine life was of no interest to him in the film; he even complained that too many Greeks took monastic vows, to the detriment of the empire's military might.

What is at issue here is not the pastiche itself but the way it resonated with Russian society.[68] Print and online media published many dozens of comments and reviews of all kinds – positive,[69] neutral[70] and

[66] *Российская газета*, 4548 (20 December 2007).

[67] For the film, http://www.google.com/interstitial?url=http://www.nakanune.ru/video/gibel__imperii_vizantijjskijj_urok; cue sheet, http://www.religare.ru/monitoring50674.htm; speaker's text, http://www.pravoslavie.ru/cgi-bin/print.cgi?item=1r550r080211112807 (last accessed 11 January 2012). Compare I. Papkova, 'Saving the Third Rome: "Fall of the Empire", Byzantium and Putin's Russia', *Reconciling the Irreconcilable*, in I. Papkova, ed., *IWM Junior Visiting Fellows' Conferences*, vol. 24 (Vienna, 2009), at http://www.iwm.at/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=131&Itemid=125 (last accessed 15 January 2012).

[68] For the first exchange of opinions, see Appendix A.

[69] For examples, see Appendix B.

[70] С. Лесков, 'Гибельный урок', *Известия*, 28 January 2008; В. Ворсобин, 'Повторит ли Россия судьбу Византии?', *Комсомольская правда*, 31 January 2008; В. Нестеров, 'Византийский реванш', *Gazeta.ru*, 29 January 2008, at http://www.

negative[71] (interestingly, some criticism came from radical Russian nationalists[72]). Shevkunov bragged in an interview:

> I was pleased to know that for its anniversary, the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces made copies of my film and distributed them as special anniversary gifts. They even put a copyright on it, which said, "copyright of the General Staff of the Russian Federation". Was it illegal? It was against the law yet very moving; I got many calls from government agencies.[73]

During the same year, Shevkunov made a tour around Russia, with the showings of his film in movie theatres followed by the author's remarks;[74] sometimes, as in Krasnodar, the local governor took part in the discussions, joining the audience in praising the film.[75]

It went so far that on 23 April 2008, the late Russian Patriarch Alexis II felt compelled to make a public statement that Shevkunov's position did not reflect the views of the Church: 'One shouldn't compare the events that took place in Byzantium with our times; one shouldn't draw parallels'.[76] Yet,

pravoslavie.ru/smi/34.htm (last accessed 12 January 2012); Н. Лисовой, 'Византия вообще не умерла, она плавно перетекла в другие исторические формы', at http://www.pravoslavie.ru/smi/56.htm (last accessed 12 January 2012); К. Ковалев-Случевский, 'С позиций Третьего Рима', *Литературная газета*, 6 February 2008; 'Гибель Империи: упражнение в иносказании', at http://www.pravaya.ru/idea/18/15001 (last accessed 12 January 2012).

[71] See Appendix C.

[72] С. Черняховский, 'Византизм как агония// Агентство политических новостей', 19 March 2008, at http://www.apn.ru/publications/article19489.htm (last accessed 17 January 2012); Yaroslavss, 'О роли Византизма в Русской истории', at http://yaroslavss.livejournal.com/ (last accessed 18 January 2012); Н. Холмогорова. 'Легко ли быть византийцем?', *Агентство политических новостей*, 4 February 2008, at http://www.apn.ru/opinions/article19105.htm (last accessed 15 January 2012).

[73] 'Встреча автора фильма «Византийский урок» со студентами Московских духовных школ', 25 August 2008, at http://www.bogoslov.ru/text/321296.html (last accessed 29 September 2014).

[74] В. Григорьев, 'В Горячем Ключе показали фильм о гибели Византии', *Вольная Кубань*, 16 October 2008.

[75] 'Русский путь: выбор выбора', *Вольная Кубань*, 17 September 2008; З. Хушт, 'Александр Ткачев: «Государство, вера, культура – это то, что мы должны сохранить и приумножить!»', *Краснодарские известия*, 18 September 2008.

[76] At www.interfax-religion.ru/?act=news&div=24127 (last accessed 29 September 2014).

under the new Patriarch Cyril, Shevkunov became the head of the cultural department of the Russian Orthodox Church.

The ruling elite's final farewell to the Western values was inaugurated by a new wave of official interest in Byzantium. In January 2014 a prominent political expert close to the Kremlin, Valerij Fadeev, the editor-in-chief of *Expert* magazine, published an article entitled 'On the Solid Ground'.[77] He begins with a lengthy praise of the great Byzantine civilization, tells that Russia is its legitimate heir and ends by saying that we are not inferior to the West, we are not on a par with the West, we are in fact superior to the West. The Russian Minister of Culture Vladimir Medinskij, whose agency published an official document declaring that 'Russia is not Europe', was asked in his interview with *Kommersant* newspaper on 15 April 2014, 'In your opinion, Russia is not Europe. Then what?' He answered: 'The roots of our civilization go back to Byzantium, which retained and developed for one thousand years the highest level of Roman civilization. It was a wonderful synergy of nations. What united this huge mass of peoples of different languages is common values and the faith'.[78] After the transfer of Crimea, President Putin held a public meeting of the top cultural figures in Yalta in August 2014. At that meeting the afore-mentioned Tikhon Shevkunov said, 'Dear Vladimir Vladimirovich! The Greeks regarded Russians as the inhabitants of the Crimea and called them Tauroscythians, which means the Russians from the Crimea [...] And therefore we are preparing to open a history theme-park, which will recount history from the old times, and about Byzantium. The exposition will be enormous'.[79]

Why is such special attention devoted to Byzantium? What is in it for the builders of the new Russian ideology? This image has little in common with the picture drawn by Leontiev, for whom the central figure of the Byzantine history was the Empress Eirene, who blinded her own son. The Byzantium of the ideologists' dreams is a country – of course, politically centralized; of course, staunchly Orthodox – but also with high living standards, solid and stable currency, an educated population, social guarantees and a developed economy. If the actual Europe does not like the Russians, the ideologists will find a different, 'genuine' one, more European than Europe itself – that is, Byzantium.

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[77] At http://expert.ru/expert/2014/03/na-tverdoj-pochve/ (last accessed 29 September 2014).

[78] At http://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2452622 (last accessed 29 September 2014).

[79] At http://news.kremlin.ru/news/46453 (last accessed 29 September 2014).

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Chapter 4

(Saint) Helena of Sofia: The Evolution of the Memory of Saint Constantine's Mother

Vesselina Vachkova[1]

De mulieribus et viris illustribus Europae[2]

There are no more remarkable female figures in the history of European culture than the two Helens, the Beautiful Helen (of Troy) and Saint Helena; their names are synonymous with behaviours that changed the lives not only of their own families, peoples and countries, but those of the entire civilized world. Undoubtedly, the glory of the two Helens is legendary and literary rather than historical, as is the glory of the two most illustrious men in the past of Europe, Alexander the Great and Constantine the Great. Accordingly, since the literary image, followed immediately by an artistic one, tends to overshadow the authentic historical character, when searching in the medieval narratives and works of art for the historical Helena, one inevitably comes across specific literary and artistic projections of her personality that are characteristic not of research genres but of apologetic, didactic, polemical, rhetorical and patriotic ones, the pieces of literature sometimes being used for invocatory/magic or purely entertainment purposes. Therefore, the approach to these projections cannot be but hermeneutic, the purpose being to find some historical or ideological matrix upon which they have been built.

Every medievalist encounters the legends of Helena of Bithynia, or Helena of Constantinople[3] or Helen of Britain.[4] Without doubt, some researchers of

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[2] Paraphrase of the famous book ascribed to Sextus Aurelius Victor, *De viris illustribus Urbis Romae*. Pseudo-Aurelius Victor, *De Viris Illustribus Urbis Romæ: a Romulo Ad Augustum*, ed. Franz Pichlmayr (Leipzig, 1911).

[3] This tradition, like the cult of Constantine, developed most likely during the period of the Renaissance, when in Raphael's rooms in the Palace of the Vatican there appeared the Hall of Constantine and 'Helena of Constantinople' by Cima da Conegliano.

[4] A. Harbus, *Helena of Britain in Medieval Legend* (Rochester, NY, 2002).

Byzantium, medieval Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire have encountered the legend of Helena of Sofia. However, while in the cases of the 'other Helenas' the historical portraits have provoked the writing of numerous works, the 'encounters' with Helena of Sofia have not stirred any scientific or literary reflection so far; in the entire vast historical research on Saint Constantine's mother (as well as in the critical editions of the *corpora* of hagiographical texts) built up since the mid-nineteenth century until the present day, there is not a single mention of Helena of Sofia. This fact is rather puzzling for two reasons. Firstly, it should be pointed out that there have been serious recent attempts to explain the attachment of Constantine to Serdica (the former name of Sofia), which he called 'My Rome',[5] where he resided from 317 AD onwards, and which he thought seriously about making his capital.[6] Some of these authors have reached the conclusion that Constantine was born in the region of Serdica.[7] This suggestion is not unknown. The early writings of Julius Firmicus Maternus and Anonymus Valesianus mention Naissus (Nish) as Constantine's birthplace;[8] in the fourth century, Naissus fell within the boundaries of Serdica (Strategia), and was under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Serdica. The problem is that today in 2015, as was the case in the time of Julius Maternus, speculation concerning the birthplace of Constantine invariably circles the alleged birthplace of his father, Constantius Chlorus, but there is no discussion of the possible birthplace of Helena. At the very

[5] Anonymous, *Fragmenta historicorum graecorum*, vol. IV, ed. C. Müller (Paris, 1841), 199; Ioannes Zonaras, *Annales*, vol. 1 libri 1–15, ed. J.-P. Migne, *PG*, vol. 134, col. 1105.

[6] C. M. Odahl, *Constantine and the Christian Empire* (London and New York, 2004), 145; N. Lenski, 'The Reign of Constantine', in N. Lenski, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine* (Cambridge, 2006), 59–90 (in particular 74 and following); H. A. Drake, 'The Impact of Constantine on Christianity', in Lenski, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine*, 111–36 (in particular 115); H. Elton, 'Warfare and the Military', in Lenski, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine*, 325–46 (especially 341). On the role of Serdica, which was the residence of the emperors of the East Galerius and Licinius in Constantine policy see P. Stephenson, *Constantine: Unconquered Emperor, Christian Victor*, 2nd edition (London, 2011), 126–8, 166, 192.

[7] J. Wilkes, 'The Provinces', in A. K. Bowman, P. Garnsey and A. Cameron, eds, *The Cambridge Ancient History. Vol. XII. The Crisis of Empire 193–337* (Cambridge, 2005), 239, 249.

[8] This localization was established later, in analogy to the traditions holding that Constantine's father, Constantius Chlorus, and 'his grandfather', Claudius Gothicus, were both born in Nish. In fact, the only positive thing known about the two emperors is that they were born somewhere in Illyria or Dardania.

least, it seems reasonable to ask whether Helena from Constantinople ever actually set foot in Constantinople,[9] which was given that name after she died (*c*.328–330).

Further, attention should be drawn to the fact that during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the idea of Sofia being the city of Helena and/or her birthplace was strongly held at different levels – from the level of local legends, through the Balkan patriotic poems, to authoritative foreign geographical maps.

Reasons for the Existence of Multiple Alleged Birthplaces of Saint Helena

The emergence of this particular tradition, as well as all other legends concerning the birthplace of Saint Helena, could be accounted for by the following circumstance: in the fourth- and fifth-century sources, no mention whatsoever was made of where the mother of Saint Constantine was born. The theme of the Anatolian origin of Saint Helena, a characteristic of the Eastern Christian hagiography, was introduced as late as the sixth century by Procopius of Caesarea. The argumentation of Procopius is limited to a reference made to the fact that the city of Drepanum, in Bithynia, was named Helenopolis by Constantine the Great.[10] Although this localization was repeated in hagiographical, popular and some scientific writings, it was, for various reasons, largely ignored in the medieval, as well as in modern, historiography. In the first case, it was due to the well-known fact that many cities were named after emperors and members of royal families despite not being connected with them in any way. Besides, many of the early medieval authors were well aware of the true reason that connected Constantine and Helena with Drepanum, this being their personal reverence for the local saint Licinius (Lucian).[11] Licinius was a Christian theologian and martyr, very famous in the late third- and fourth century, but later his teachings were

[9] At least, according to the extant Byzantine sources, in Constantinople there used to be monuments dedicated to Helena, but there is no particular memory of her other than a vague reference made to her being buried, together with Constantine, in the Holy Apostles Church: see V. Vachkova, *Blank Spaces in the Bulgarian Cultural Memory* (Sofia, 2010, in Bulgarian), 93–105.

[10] Procopius, *De aedificiis*, ed. J. Haury, *Procopii Caesariensis opera omnia*, I–III (Leipzig, 1905–1913), 5.2.

[11] Eusebii Caesariensis, *Historia ecclesiastica*, ed. E. Schwartz, *Eusebius' Werke*, 1–3 (Leipzig, 1903–1909), VIII, 13.2, IX, 6.2–3; Hieronimus, *De viris illustribus liber ad Dextrum praefectus praetorio*, ed. J.-P. Migne, *PL*, vol. 23, col. 77.

compared to the teachings of the heretics, Paul of Samosata and Arius. As for the modern vision, it is a matter, as will be discussed below, of purely historical analyses that disprove the possibility of Helena being born in Drepanum. This is, for example, the view of Jan Drijvers, one of the best students of the problem.[12]

This chapter traces, in the centuries following the political collapse of Byzantium, a tradition that is Sofian in spirit but Byzantine in contents; the peculiarities of the themes of 'Helena from Bulgaria' and 'Helena from Sofia' prior to the sixteenth century will not be treated. Reference will be made only to the earliest preserved texts, reflecting the spread of the said themes among the literate (most probably church) circles of Bulgarian society. The first extant source, *Story of the prophet Isaiah, how he was taken up by the angel to the seventh heaven*, dates to the eleventh century.[13] The *Story* is a typical patriographic writing in which the confusion of epochs is due not to ignorance but to temporal inversions used intentionally whereby figures belonging to different ages become contemporary.[14] The story relates how Saint Helena, exiled from Rome after the death of her husband, came to the Bulgarian tsar Peter. It was in the court of Tsar Peter that Constantine was born. Tsar Peter, who is among the few Bulgarian rulers canonized as saints (very much like Constantine, who is among the few Byzantine emperor-saints), sent the son of Helena on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. After the pilgrimage, on his way back, Constantine founded a town on the Bosporus and named it Constantinople. The two rulers lived in 'fraternal love', and, as the logic of narrative has it, Helena remained in the court of Tsar Peter.[15] Although the tenth-century tsar was not, as the medieval tradition has it, the founder of Serdica-Sredetz,[16]

[12] J. W. Drijvers, *Helena Augusta: The Mother of Constantine the Great and her Finding of the True Cross* (Leiden and New York, 1992), 9–12; C. Mango, 'The Empress Helena, Helenopolis, Pylae', *Travaux et Mémoires* 12 (1994), 143–58.

[13] The original, translation and comments see in V. Tapokova-Zaimova and A. Miltenova, *Historical–Apocalyptic Writings in Byzantium and Medieval Bulgaria* (Sofia, 1996), 192–206 (for the cited paragraph, in particular, 200).

[14] For the characteristic features of the patriographic literature see G. Dagron, C*onstantinople imaginaire. Études sur le recueil des 'Patria*' (Paris, 1984).

[15] In fact, the Bulgarian basileus Peter had enjoyed special fame and a legitimizing role in Byzantine rhetoric, although this particular Peter's glory was associated more with the age of Romanos Lekapenos than that of Constantine the Great. See in detail in P. Stephenson, *Byzantium's Balkan Frontier: A Political Study of the Northern Balkans, 900–1204* (Cambridge, 2000), 24.

[16] From the ninth to the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth centuries the name of the city was Sredetz, after which the city came to be known as Sofia,

Serdica was undoubtedly one of his main residences, which accounts for the persistent appearance of the two royal personages in local Serdican memory.

Vincenzo Coronelli on Helena of Sofia

The eleventh-century concept that connects Saint Helena with Bulgaria was vital, and the idea was far from being local. A late-seventeenth-century Italian map sets out the relationship between Saint Helena and the Bulgarian lands. The map in question dates from the year 1692 and is entitled 'Map of the Danube from Vienna to Nikopol'.[17] Its author was the chief cartographer of the Venetian Republic, Vincenzo Maria Coronelli (1650–1718).[18] Some of the mapped geographic sites are provided with brief explanations as to their names, occasionally accompanied by short texts concerning notable events of European history. A fragment of the map, for example, gives the names of Nish in different languages, quoted, as stated in the caption, according to the writings of Ammianus, Zosimus, Ptolemy and Kouropalates, followed by the remark that it was the birthplace of Constantine the Great ('Patria di Costantino Magno'). The information about Sofia is structured in much the same way. First, the different names of the city are listed in different languages (Sofia, Triaditza, antica Sardica); then the recovery of the city is mentioned under Justinian; next comes the seventeenth-century statute of Beylerbeylik, the seat of a beylerbey;[19] the Council of Serdica convened by Pope Julius (in 347 AD according to the text); and finally, the information that is of significance to our topic – that Sofia was the birthplace of Saint Helena ('Patria di S. Helena').

after its major church, dedicated to Saint Sofia. From the point of view of the Bulgarian–Byzantine layers of local memory, which are practically inseparable, the following is interesting to point out: according to all Western and Byzantine sources, the name 'Triaditza', used parallel with it, is Bulgarian; however, according to all Bulgarian scientific and popular publications, without exception, the name 'Triaditza' is Byzantine, established after Bulgaria came under Byzantine rule in 1018.

[17] The map is taken from the collection of Doctor Simeon Simov. It was published in *Bulgarian Lands in the European Cartographic Tradition (3rd–19th centuries). Collected by D. Stoimenov* (Sofia, 2008), map III–18, 284, 287–8.

[18] The promotion of Coronelli to the position of cartographer of Serenissima Repubblica di Venezia was due to his great authority as an encyclopedic scholar, see in detail in E. L. Stevenson, *Terrestrial and Celestial Globes: Their History and Construction, including a Consideration of their Value as Aids in the Study of Geography and Astronomy* (London, 1921), 92–120.

[19] A beylerbeylik was the largest administrative entity in the Ottoman Empire.

The knowledge and authority of Coronelli are beyond doubt. All personal qualities of the renowned cartographer and cosmographer aside,[20] it should be pointed out that, as a Venetian, he had access to the famous Venetian archives where much of the documentary heritage kept in Constantinople[21] prior to the year 1204 was also preserved.

Of the geographical objects on the map, only about fifteen sites are noted. The notes refer to the most popular historical personages and events connected with the depicted region: such as, for example, the bridge over the Danube built by the emperor Trajan (about the time of the last war against the Dacians in 107 AD) and the battle at Nikopolis (25 September 1396). In Coronelli's view, the fact that Helena was born in Sofia was at least as well known to his contemporaries as the fact that Trajan had built a bridge over the Danube, or that a great battle had occurred near Nikopolis. In the context of the history of Sofia, it was as natural to determine the city as the 'birthplace of Saint Helena' as it was to associate it with the convocation of the Serdica Council.[22]

In other words, for Coronelli and his Italian contemporaries,[23] it was a recognized fact that Saint Helena was born in Sofia, whether she was actually born there or not. This short analysis raises the reasonable question, what had authors like Coronelli read about Saint Helena, and what did they know about her?

Saint Helena would appear connected with Sofia in different ways in the accounts of foreign travellers and Ottoman writers alike in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Thus, in 1577 Solomon Schweiger wrote:

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[20] The special collection of Coronelli's works, known as the 'Coronelliana Marciana', is kept in Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana in Venice. Regarding Coronelli's views on history on which his maps are based, see V. Coronelli, *Epitome cosmografica, o, Compendiosa introduttione all'astronomia, geografia, & idrografia per l'uso, dilucidatione, e fabbrica delle sfere, globi, planisferi, astrolabi, e tavole geografiche, e particolarmente degli stampati, e spiegati nelle publiche lettioni* (Colonia, 1693).

[21] D. R. Headrick, *When Information Came of Age: Technologies of Knowledge in the Age of Reason and Revolution, 1700–1850* (Oxford, 2000), 12, 153–5, 160–164, 172. For a general overview of the sources (narratives, ancient and medieval maps) used by the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century cartographers see J. Lelewel, *Géographie du Moyen âge, 5 tomes* (Bruxelles, 1850, 1852–1857); J. Lelewel, Épilogue de la géographie du moyen âge (Bruxelles, 1857).

[22] Modern science dates the Serdica Council to the period between the years 341 and 343, and, rarely, mainly in earlier studies, to 347/8; the dating suggested on the map could be considered as accurate enough.

[23] The text of the historical notes is not in Latin, but in Italian.

> Saint Sofia Church – turned into a mosque at the time – was built by Saint Helena. Helena was sent by her father [the name of the enigmatic father is not mentioned, but he was obviously seen, in British fashion, as a king] to the main city of Bulgaria. Upon her death Helena was buried in the church built by her.[24]

Some hundred years later, in 1682, Giovanni Benaglia related the following about his visit to the church of Saint Sofia:

> We visited Saint Sofia Church, now a mosque, situated opposite our inn. It is believed that the church was founded by Sofia, the daughter of the emperor Constantine and Saint Helena, who was left by her father in this major town of Bulgaria, and there she died and was buried in an arch in the same church. Different things are said about her, that she appeared there at night and spoke. One may believe what one pleases, and I am telling what I have heard.[25]

That these stories did not come as a result of the emerging Turkish historiography, as has often been suggested, can be judged by a story written by Evliya Celebi, who visited Sofia in the middle of the seventeenth century. Evliya Celebi's narrative is set 'in the age of Jesus Christ' (three centuries before the time of Saint Helena, i.e. well before the establishment of the Christian power in Byzantium-Constantinople). Saint Helena is transformed into King Elina, while Saint Sofia is a wonderful young woman from the town of Plovdiv, who discovers in the Vitosha mountain a great treasure and uses it to build a town at the foot of the mountain named after her. The same treasure is used by King Elina for 40 years to enrich the Saint Sophia church in his city (i.e. Hagia Sophia in Constantinople).[26]

Given the above examples, it is not altogether surprising that Helena should appear as 'Sofian' (or 'Brachanian') in the rhymed history of Andrija Kachich Mioshich written at the middle of the eighteenth century:

> Sveta Ielena kribarisza, xenna Constantina klora Rimskago szesara, a Majka vellikoga Costantina szesara, kojaga ù Nissa Bosne porrodi, a onnase rodii ù Bracu, kaku mudrii svidoçe, olii ù Bulgarii, kako drughii ochie, à grada zvana Sofia.

[24] Quoted in B. Filov, *Sofian St Sophia Church* (Sofia, 2004), 192.

[25] Quoted in Filov, *Sofian St Sophia Church*, 25–290, particularly the quotation on 190.

[26] Filov, *Sofian St Sophia Church*, 189–98, 248–55.

> Queen Saint Helena, wife of the Roman Caesar Constantine Chlorus, the mother of Caesar Constantine the Great who bore him in Nis Bosnian, she herself being born in Brachka as some wise people say, while other people say that she was a Bulgarian woman from the town called Sofia.[27]

It is right to mention of course, that in the period of Ottoman domination Sofia was invariably called 'the chief city of Bulgaria', although in the Middle Ages the city was the capital and patriarchal seat only for a brief period of time, in the late tenth century, and during the Ottoman rule it was the capital not of Bulgaria, but of Rumelia (European Turkey). This status of the city was achieved due to three fundamental facts deeply and directly related to Byzantium, namely the well-known affinity of Constantine the Great for Serdica, repeatedly mentioned by Byzantine authors until late in the twelfth century; the magnificent Saint Sophia church built by Justinian; and the idea of Helena being connected with the place. This political and religious aura is, on the one hand, among the main reasons for the rise around Sofia, at an early age, of a significant church-and-monastery complex later known as 'the Sofia (Small) Holy Mountain'.[28] On the other hand, the same remarkable yet undoubtedly Byzantine image of Sofia resulted in Bulgarian dislike of the city of Sophia from the period of the so-called Revival (from the end of the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries) and immediately after the Liberation (1878). In particular, Bulgarians after the Liberation did not show much respect towards the ancient city's monuments, including Saint Sofia church, which was used as a fire tower, and even disliked the name of Sofia, describing it as 'outdated' and, for some unknown reason, 'Turkish'.

Adoption and Rejection of the Byzantine Heritage

As far as Coronelli was concerned, the Sofian origin of Helena was as undeniable a fact as was the Council of Serdica. Even to raise a question about Helena and Sofia caused problems. The work of Jan Drijvers, devoted

[27] A. Kačić Miošić, *Razgovor ugodni naroda slovinskoga* (Venice, 1801), 13. English translation by V. Nikolova.

[28] Until the construction of Hagia Sophia church in Constantinople, which was a kind of demonstration of power on the part of Justinian after the Nika riot (532) in the course of which the old church was destroyed, the largest churches in the Byzantine capital were Saint Irene and Saints Sergius and Bacchus. Since both churches are still preserved, it is easy to see that they are fully comparable in scale to the Sofian Saint Sofia church.

to Helena, consistently and convincingly demonstrates why Helena could not have been born in the city of Drepanum in Bithynia. In conclusion, the author refuses to engage with any theory about the origin of Helena, merely enumerating the possible cities and regions, namely 'Naissus, Caphar, Phacar in Mesopotamia, Edessa, Trier and even Colchester'.[29] Obviously, the question of the origin of Helena has become, in this case, purely academic. Turning it into a purely academic matter may be the reason why some of the ablest scholars of Constantine the Great's rule and family have referred only to the Drepanum thesis, following the ease and conviction of Procopius's treatment of the issue.[30] The forgetfulness, or wilful neglect, of a certain tradition concerning the origin of Saint Helena, which was not unheard of also in the West, is partly due to the full loss of interest in it in the milieu where it was most probably created, i.e. the Balkan Christian population.

Of course, the verses of a poem, the legends and narratives in itineraries, a reference in a map cannot be considered as enough evidence to localize the birthplace of Saint Helena. Nor can the references in the local folklore, where Helena was not only the foundress of Sofia but also the last Bulgarian queen who died near the city, nor the fact that the names of Constantine and Helena are abundant in the toponymy of Sofia and its large hinterland. In other words, it is hard to establish what the original sources used by Coronelli were or where Mioshich's conviction came from that the legendary Helena of Sofia was in actuality Saint Helena, the mother of Constantine the Great, and not, say, her granddaughter Helena, Constantine and Fausta's daughter. However, it is easier to answer why the Balkan Christians, as well as their coreligionists who visited the city and wrote about the Balkans in the period between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, willingly told the legends about Helena of Sofia. The reason is that the local adoption of Helena was the highest possible level of appropriation of Byzantine legitimacy from, so to say, its prenatal roots, i.e. it is a claim of being 'Byzantine before Byzantium itself'. Not only was Helena of Sofia a mighty local identification image, it was an undeniable 'historical' argument for the contemporary Christian rulers, the heirs to the Byzantine emperors of old, the first of whom was Helena's son, Constantine the Great, to claim core rights over the whole of Europe. There is no need to explain how and why the rights over Sofia, the 'capital of Europe' (Rumelia, often named just Europe), not only proved, at certain

[29] Drijvers, *Helena Augusta*, 12.

[30] H. A. Pohlsander, *Helena: Empress and Saint* (Chicago, 1995); see also his recent research H. A. Pohlsander, 'Helena, Heraclius, and the True Cross', *Quidditas* 25 (2004), 15–41 (especially at 15).

times, to be the same rights of the Christian rulers over the Ottoman capital, Constantinople, but were ideologically even more important than those in a strictly European perspective.[31]

The same logic, though reversed, is discernible when trying to explain why, in the prime period of the memory of Helena of Sofia, the theme was neglected by some writers, including Bulgarian ones. In the seventeenth century, for example, the historian Peter Bogdan Bakshev, who was especially interested in the Christian history of Sofia,[32] did not mention that Helena had even visited the city. The fact was also not mentioned in the eighteenth century by Paisius of Hilendar, the author of the most popular history of Bulgaria from the period of the National Revival.[33] This lack of mention, like in many other cases, did not in the least mean 'lack of knowledge'. No doubt, Bakshev, being a Catholic bishop of Sofia, must have at least heard the legends of Sofia. These legends were still being told as late as the end of the nineteenth century to be transformed, at the beginning of the twentieth century, into stories about famous 'prophetesses-healers in the ruins of St. Sofia'[34] and finally disappearing as late as during the communist regime (after 1944). The Sofian origin of Saint Helena was not mentioned by Bakshev and Paisius simply because it did not fit with their concepts, just as it did not fit with the ideas of many historians from the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and also with other colleagues of theirs from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Father Peter Bogdan was perhaps the first Bulgarian modern historian; however, he was also faithful to the Catholic tradition. In the Papal tradition, the memory of Saint Helena was invariably connected with Jerusalem, Rome and (through her son, Constantine) Constantinople. Paisius, in his turn, was faithful to the emerging Bulgarian nationalism, which meant, to a great extent, consistent anti-Byzantinism. Yet the memory of Helena, whether she was Sofian or not, was a Byzantine one *par excellence*.

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[31] Compare 'Son [of Michel the Brave, Prince of Wallachia, Transylvania and Moldavia, leader together with Sigismund Báthory, of the "last anti-Ottoman crusade" in 1595–1599] unique pensée est de marcher contre la Turquie et d'établir sa residence à Sofia' ['His only thought is to march against the Turks and to establish his residence in Sophia'], N. Jorga, *Byzance après Byzance* (Bucarest, 1935), 150–51, and n. 2.

[32] *Petar Bogdan Bakshev. Seventeenth-century Bulgarian Politician and Historian*, ed. B. Dimitrov (Sofia, 2001), Appendix 4, 149–50.

[33] Paisius of Hilendar, *History of Slavs and Bulgarians*, ed. and trans. P. Dinekov (Sofia, 1998).

[34] R. Kostentseva, *My Native Town, Sofia, at the End of the 19th and the Beginning of the 20th Century and Later* (Sofia, 2008), 41–3.

In a nutshell, seventeenth- and eighteenth-century concepts of Helena show two radically different lines followed by people of often similar education and access to the same information. Peter Bogdan Bakshev lived and studied in Italy at much the same time as Vincenzo Coronelli, while Paisius was a monk in an Athonite monastery; he had at his disposal the book depositories of Mount Athos. What is more, Paisius was discharged from his duties as a *taxidiotis* (church tax collector), so he was pretty much in the situation of a traveller as far as searching for local historical information was concerned. Nevertheless, for the Italian Coronelli, Helena was born in Sofia, while it was not so for the Bulgarian Bakshev; likewise, to the Sofians and foreign travellers who re-narrated their stories in their writings, the fourth-century Helena was a *sui generis* local 'cultural hero', while Paisius considered as such only the Sofian new martyrs from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries, who had refused to convert to Islam. The key to understanding this seemingly paradoxical picture is that Saint Helena was conceived of as being both native, and foreign, exclusively through the prism of the common Balkan Eastern Orthodox Christian heritage.

The problem of Paisius and his followers, in particular, was that at the core of this common Balkan Eastern Orthodox Christian heritage, alongside Constantine and Helena, there also stood Constantinople. For every medieval Balkan Christian, Constantinople itself was a strong image; it was not by accident that the tenth- and eleventh-century Bulgarians came to call the city 'Tsarigrad' (City of the Kings/Queen of Cities). It was not by accident moreover that in the original text of the modern Bulgarian anthem the boundaries of Bulgaria extend from Vitosha (i.e. Sofia) to Tsarigrad.[35] In the nineteenth century, however, Tsarigrad had ceased to be the symbol of Christian unity and might. It was not even associated any more with past political conflicts and wars (which were frequent between the Bulgarian tsars and Byzantine emperors), or the seat of the Turkish Sultan, but rather with an ongoing and extremely violent spiritual confrontation with the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople. In other words, the legend about the Sofian Helena, mother of the founder of Constantinople, 'fell victim' to the idea of the Bulgarian Church gaining independence from the 'Greek' Ecumenical Patriarchate.

The extent to which such 'casualties' were inevitable and were subsequently found to be irreversible is evidenced by the following: the

[35] R. Malchev, 'Medieval and national revival motifs in the Bulgarian national anthem "Dear Motherland"', *Ethnology Urbana* (Sofia, 2005), 172–83 (especially at 172, 177–9).

Independent Bulgarian Church (Exarchate) was established by the Turkish Sultan in 1870 and immediately sparked the excommunication of the Bulgarian Church by the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople. This schism was to continue until 1945, when the excommunication ended.[36] By then, in communist Bulgaria, the memory of Helena of Sofia, and all Christian characters, was subjected to the *damnatio memoriae* characteristic of the atheist regime. Even the old seaside resort of 'Saint Constantine and Helena' was renamed 'Droujba' ['Friendship']. Paradoxical as it is, it was the communist regime that caused the next local metamorphosis of the memory of Saint Helena. Not before long, the socialist company Balkantourist started offering fire dancing as one of their greatest attractions. It is not known when, where and in what cultural context the ancient ritual of dancing on fire was born. For the tourist industry, its 'originality' and attractiveness were the only important factors. The fact that the dancers perform while holding icons of Saints Constantine and Helena and stage the ritual on 21 May, the festival of the royal couple in the Eastern Church, did not attract attention either at the time or after the fall of communism (1989).[37] Emptied of its religious and historical essence, this peculiar double cult of Saint Constantine and Saint Helena had a chance to survive. Meanwhile, tens, if not hundreds, of Orthodox images dating from the fourteenth- to the twenty-first century of the *isoapostoloi* ['equal-to-the-apostles'] Constantine and Helena holding the True Cross exist. Accordingly, today this double cult is seen as the only memory of the saints in the Orthodox world, associated with the role of Saint Helena in the invention (i.e. discovery) of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem (*c.*320–327 AD) and of her royal son in the victory of the Cross in the Roman Empire – from the Battle of the Milvian Bridge (28 October 312) and

[36] Actually the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople only recognized the Bulgarian Patriarchate's autonomy as late as 1961, after all the other Eastern churches.

[37] The tradition established by mid-twentieth-century authors of regarding the fire dance exclusively as an externally Christianized ancient folklore ritual spread in the narrow region of Eastern Bulgaria and Northern Greece only, has persisted after the fall of the communist regime. See M. Arnaudov, *Fire Dance in Thrace*, vol. 1 (Sofia, 1971); M. Arnaudov, *Bulgarian Folklore Festivals* (Veliko Tarnovo, 1996), 101–5; D. Marinov, 'Popular faith and religious folk customs', *Journal of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences* (Sofia, 1994), 61–111; I. Georgieva, *Fire-dancing in Strandja*, in V. Fol, ed., *Cultural–Historical Heritage of Strandja-Sakar* (Sofia, 1987), 105–14; P. Madjarov, *Life of the East Thracian Bulgarians according to their Songs and Stories* (Sofia, 2001), 245–53. Concerning the predominantly Christian nature of the ritual, see D. Xygalatas, 'Ethnography, historiography, and the making of history in the tradition of the Anastenaria', *History and Anthropology* 22/1 (2011), 57–74.

issuing of the so-called Edict of Milan in 313 to his death on 22 May 337 (in commemoration of which the festival of Saints Constantine and Helena was set on 21 May).

That Saint Helena, who is part of the double cult of Saints Constantine and Helena, and could provisionally be called 'Helena of Jerusalem', is a model reproduced by the Church of Constantinople throughout the Middle Ages. But this model, well known as it might be today in the Eastern Churches, was never, in pre-modern times, dominant in the Orthodox world. Armenian, Georgian and Ethiopian churches, for example, have had their saint kings-founders and/or Baptists and saint queens-foundresses and/or Baptists. In the Coptic Church, the invention of the True Cross is connected not with Saint Augusta Helena but with Saint Augusta Eudokia, the wife of Theodosius II, who died in 460 AD in the Holy Land, where she had lived for almost twenty years. As is evident from the preserved medieval Bulgarian church homilies, the festivals of Saint Helena, crowned with the discovery of the Cross, were the subject of a separate cult,[38] just as was the case in the official medieval Latin tradition reflected in the Western iconography of Saint Helena. In Bulgaria, a tendency to impose the double cult of Saint Constantine and Saint Helena, with a certain dominance of the figure of Constantine over that of Helena, appeared as late as the time of Saint Patriarch Evtimius (fourteenth century);[39] however, as can be judged from the preserved Sofian memory, it remained latent until at least the early twentieth century.

In short, the presented memory of Helena of Sofia illustrates the diverse forms and contents, quite different from the official double cult, it has acquired when it was no longer possible for it to be directly and permanently influenced by Constantinople (after 1453).

Although this double cult undoubtedly dominated at the level of iconography, at the levels of narrative and ideology its impact was negligible or even absent. No less eloquent is the memory in which the markedly 'matronage'[40] figure of the Sofian Saint Helena, which could not have emerged as Byzantine inspired (or might well have functioned as an antithesis of the

[38] E. Mircheva, *German Collection of 1358/1359*, Study and Publication of the Text (Sofia, 2006), 260–83. The original collection dates back to the tenth- or eleventh century.

[39] Evtimius, Patriarch of Tarnovo, *Eulogy for Great and Holy, Equal to Apostles Tsars Constantine and Helena*, in Kl. Ivanova, ed., *Evtimius' Works* (Sofia, 1990), 113–47.

[40] L. Brubaker, 'Memories of Helena: Patterns in Imperial Female Matronage in the Fourth and Fifth Centuries', in L. James, ed., W*omen, Men and Eunuchs: Gender in Byzantium* (London and New York, 1997), 52–75.

official Constantinople ideology centred on Constantine), under certain conditions, became the symbol of Byzantine heritage – a heritage that was conceived of, depending on the circumstances, as Orthodox (Balkan), as European, Roman and Christian, and that was, depending on the objectives, either recognized and accepted, or rejected.

PART II
Art and Music

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Chapter 5
Byzantium: A Night at the Opéra

Dion C. Smythe[1]

> As a Greek, Callas was an outsider to La Scala, Covent Garden, the Paris Opéra, the Met – turfs she conquered: the outsider who enters a field and vanquishes all opposition is an appealing figure [...][2]
>
> Die Sonne strahlte über Byzanz![3]

This chapter is not about Byzantine operas; none have survived. It is not about the influence of Byzantine musical theory and practice on the Western operatic tradition. Such a paper could be written, but not by me. Nor is this paper a trawl through the full operatic canon, identifying (for praise or damnation?) those composers who were more or less proficient at creating performances that encapsulated some Byzantine 'historical truth'. Rather, 'I have a little list':[4] Handel's *Tamerlano* (1724), Donizetti's *Belisario* (1836), Massenet's *Esclarmonde* (1889), Siegfried Wagner's *Sonnenflammen* (1912; performed 1918) and Tavener's *St Mary of Egypt* (1992); others – such as Abranyi's *Bisanc* (1942: unperformed) or Sir Michael Tippett's suppressed opera for children *Robert of Sicily* (1938)[5] – could have been included; 'I'm sure they *will* be missed.'

My intention in this chapter is to look at how these five operas – from different countries, from different periods and in very different operatic traditions (though topped and tailed with what may be construed as operas from the 'English canon') – have all made use of Byzantium as subject matter. These five operas show that the reception of Byzantium's exotic setting is part of the idiom of the Western operatic tradition from the composers of

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[1] Queen's University, Belfast.

[2] Wayne Koestenbaum, *The Queen's Throat: Opera, Homosexuality and the Mystery of Desire* (New York, 1993), 140.

[3] Luise Gunter-Kornagel, *Weltbild in Siegfried Wagners Opern* (Karlsruhe, 1998), 135.

[4] W. S. Gilbert, 'As some day it may happen', *The Mikado*, Act I, part Va; music by Arthur Sullivan.

[5] Ian Kemp, *Tippett: The Composer and His Music* (Oxford and New York, 1987), 21–2, 34 and 53.

classical *opera seria*, through the development of early nineteenth-century Romanticism, the full-blown Grand Opera style, to the experimentalist composers of the twentieth century, composing 'ikons' in words and music. This is Byzantium perceived very much as 'the other'; as originating in the orient, as Edward Said has taught us to think.[6] There is little of Byzantium 'as it really was' in these operas: in place, in character or in action. Within an English-speaking tradition, perhaps it should not be surprising that the art-form of opera seeks out another 'exotic'. To Samuel Johnston, opera was 'an exotic and irrational entertainment';[7] and this exotic quality – which after all Byzantine Studies shares[8] – is the thrust of this chapter. It is the norm for operas to have setting distant in time or place:[9] Delibes's *Lahmé*, Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*, *Tosca* or *Turandot*, Verdi's *Aïda*,[10] Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. Other operas (Puccini's *La Bohème* or Bizet's *Carmen*[11]) within the Western canon may be held to be less exotic, but the 'missing genre' is the 'kitchen sink opera' – though twentieth-century operas such as Britten's *Owen Wingrave* or *The Turn of the Screw*, Adams's *The Death of Klinghöffer*,[12] Tippett's *The Knot Garden* or especially Turnage's *The Silver Tassie* are more domestic in scope, with Adès's *Powder her Face* as the first in the genre of 'bathroom operas'. However, though the setting of opera may be exotic, it is not always oriental, as Puccini's *La fanciulla del West* proves. So 'exotic' in

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6 Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London, 2003).

7 Anthony Arblaster, *Viva la libertà! Politics in Opera* (London and New York, 1992), 3.

8 As most recently Averil Cameron has set forth in her *Byzantine Matters* (London, 2014); see also the review of this work by Peter Brown, 'The Purple Stone of Emperors', *New York Review of Books*, 18 December, 2014 issue, at http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2014/dec/18/purple-stone-emperors (last accessed 12 December 2014).

9 Herbert Lindenberger, *Opera: The Extravagant Art* (Ithaca, NY, and London, 1984), 16 and 53.

10 Interestingly, Edward Said wrote a piece on Verdi's *Aïda*, exploring the extent to which it conformed to his ideas of Orientalism: 'The Imperial Spectacle', *Grand Street*, 6/2 (Winter 1987), 82–104. Dealing with the same question, Paul Robinson concludes that Verdi's *Aïda* much more connected with Verdi's ideas about the Italian Risorgimento from the 1840s: 'Is *Aïda* an Orientalist Opera?', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, 5 (1993), 133–40. See further, Ralph P. Locke, 'Beyond the Exotic: How "Eastern" is *Aïda*?', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, 17 (2005), 1051–139.

11 Whilst it could be suggested that *Carmen* is somehow 'not exotic' in its location or subject matter, Paul Robinson states that it displays some of the conventions of 'orientalised' European music – that is, music in the European classical tradition that was to suggest Orientalism: 'Is *Aïda* an Orientalist Opera?', 136–7.

12 Also apparently reviewed (largely positively) by Edward Said: Robinson, 'Is *Aïda* an Orientalist Opera?', 133.

opera does not always mean 'oriental', and whilst Said's insights into the 'otherness' of the orientalising role are useful, nevertheless opera as an art-form, whether high culture or popular, must speak to its audience in terms of universal experience: love, loss, betrayal and loyalty.[13]

In the United Kingdom, both opera and Byzantium are seen to belong to 'high culture'. They share a number of apparent characteristics: the mixed genre of opera,[14] requiring the union of words, music, action, costume[15] and scene, is matched by the multidisciplinarity of Byzantine Studies. Opera is exotic; Byzantium is arcane and esoteric. Opera performed is best experienced in the original language, the English National Opera notwithstanding; Byzantinists switch effortlessly from language to language: *graeca sunt, non leguntur* is not the *bon mot* by which they live their lives. In Britain, whilst Purcell can be identified as the father of opera in English, nevertheless it is a fractured tradition, and there has always been something of the alien and asylum-seeker about opera. Italian *opera seria*, as composed by that nice Mr Handel, was all the rage in early Hanoverian England, until Robert Gay's *Beggar's Opera* (1728) showed the world what the English really thought of these foreign imports.[16]

But *The Beggar's Opera* was a one-off; no native tradition of *opera buffa* developed in England. From Handel to Benjamin Britten is quite a leap; Britten did not locate any of his opera in Byzantium. This absence of a popular native form in nineteenth-century England makes it hard to comprehend the great unease with which opera was regarded by governments of varying hues in nineteenth-century continental Europe. Censors in Rome, Venice and Bourbon Naples all saw performances in the opera houses as possibly seditious, and definitely threats to public order. Verdi, with his name as acronym, and the

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[13] Lindenberger, *Opera: The Extravagant Art*, 79–80.

[14] 'Indeed, since its beginnings opera has proved shameless in expropriating forms of discourse from virtually all other arts to articulate its meanings. One could speak of opera's penchant for drawing within itself those forms that at any given moment seem alien to its audience's expectations'. Lindenberger, *Opera: The Extravagant Art*, 75.

[15] 'Theodor Adorno has generalised that 'costume is an essential of opera – an opera without costume would, in contrast to a play seem paradoxical'. Lindenberger, *Opera: The Extravagant Art*, 53. Lindenberger adds a footnote: 'Bürgerliche Oper, 24. Adorno's point can be demonstrated through the fact that in recent years it has become common to revive forgotten operas by composers such as Rossini and Donizetti in concert form. Although the economics of production make a fully staged version impossible, these operas are often performed in what is called "semistaged" form – without scenery but with costumes and gestures.'

[16] Lindenberger, *Opera: The Extravagant Art*, 90.

performance of the 'Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves' from *Nabucco* at his funeral, encapsulated Italian national aspirations. Similarly, the development of the German 'Romantic' style, as settings for 'native' subjects, was a way of creating a 'national sense' for the Second Empire under the leadership of Prussia, set apart from the French and Italian traditions.[17]

By contrast with the west-European, continental traditions, it is a phenomenon of the United Kingdom to see opera as an expression of alienating 'high culture'; in fact, opera is innately not 'high brow' or elitist, as experiences in Italy, France, Germany or Austria show. The United Kingdom – as in so many ways (unified in 1707 or 1801; its civil war and revolution in the seventeenth century) – is different to the continent, from where all strange things originate.[18] To the chattering classes of the metropolis and Islington, opera is an elitist entertainment, the last remaining refuge of the 'high style'.[19] This is heard most clearly on Radio 4's 'Today' programme (the village pump to *The Times*' 'parish magazine'), which resounded to howls of outrage and 'dumbing down' as the ENO staged *On the Town* and other 'musicals' rather than 'opera in English' in the 2005 season. Tippett's *A Child of our Time*[20] was acceptable because it is about a serious subject (performed in close proximity to Holocaust Remembrance Day). *Pirates* was acceptable as well – perhaps because it does not have to be translated (though surtitles would have helped), or perhaps because it is 'G and S' [Gilbert and Sullivan] and as such as 'pukka' as 'G and T' [gin and tonic]. In the same 2005 season, Berg's *Lulu* was an acceptable offering because no one would like it; but *On the Town* was a step too far: it is American, has good tunes and is fun. Within Anglo-American cultural discourse, then, opera is exotic, probably irrational, 'histrionic, extravagant, gestural, ceremonial and performative'[21] – how similar, how very similar to the home-life of our own dear Byzantium! This performative aspect of opera causes difficulties for cliometricians: 'vocal brilliance or orchestral sumptuousness must take precedence over a composer's or a performer's fidelity to the text or to the external world that the text

[17] Arthur Groos, 'Introduction', in Arthur Groos and Roger Parker, eds, *Reading Opera* (Princeton, NJ, 1988), 5–6.

[18] Lindenberger, *Opera: The Extravagant Art*, 9.

[19] Lindenberger, *Opera: The Extravagant Art*, 15.

[20] *A Child of our Time* was to have been an opera on the Easter Rising, but it became an oratorio following the assassination of a Nazi diplomat by Herschel Grynszpan in Paris in November 1938 – which provoked *Kristallnacht*. See Meirion Bowen, *Michael Tippet* (London, 1982), 22. Tippett began composition on 4 September 1939 – that is, the day after war broke out (for the United Kingdom). Kemp, *Tippett*, 37.

[21] Lindenberger, *Opera: The Extravagant Art*, 76.

claims to represent'.[22] An operatic performance must be considered as a thing apart and cannot be judged on the grounds of historical accuracy.[23] What we experience in historical opera is 'affective' or perhaps in the jargon of the modern educationalists, 'empathetic history' – reminiscent of Monteverdi's third level of discourse, the *concitato* ('agitated' or wrath) to supplement the pre-existing *molle* (prayer or humility) and *temperato* (temperance).[24] For audiences in London, Leeds, Cardiff or Glyndebourne opera permits audiences to experience the heightened feelings of the 'great and the good', rendering them personal, making them immediate and universal.[25]

Handel's *Tamerlano* (1724)

My survey of five 'Byzantine operas' begins with Handel's *Tamerlano* (1724), an *opera seria*. The *opera seria* form has a number of characteristic features. The cast usually numbers six or eight. The setting is mythological or in the distant past. The characters are interconnected by 'love-chains' (the path of true love never runs clearly in *opera seria* and usually involves disguises, if not characters 'dressed as a girl'). The main theme of the opera, which is sustained over four or five acts until the final climax and resolution, normally displays the extreme nobility of the hero. Conventionally *opera seria* is composed of a number of 'set-piece' arias (largely the expression of the protagonists' emotions), joined by tranches of recitative (mainly devoted to driving the plot forward). Each scene was supposed to end with an aria by one of the characters, who then left the stage. Duets and trios – never mind ensemble pieces – were few. Apart from the rather overdrawn 'stage villain' (usually a base or tenor), the characters were painfully 'noble' in deed, and the drama was worked out through their interaction, rather than by any external action. The location and plot were largely incidental to the working out of the drama; though set in a time and place, the drama is otherworldly and timeless.[26]

Born in Halle in 1685, Handel learnt his skill in Italian *opera seria* between 1706 and 1710, during his residence in Italy. Appointed to the court of the Elector of Hanover in 1710, George Frederic Handel took London by storm

[22] Lindenberger, *Opera: The Extravagant Art*, 113.
[23] Lindenberger, *Opera: The Extravagant Art*, 257.
[24] Lindenberger, *Opera: The Extravagant Art*, 81.
[25] Lindenberger, *Opera: The Extravagant Art*, 265.
[26] Patrick J. Smith, *The Tenth Muse: A Historical Study of the Opera Libretto* (New York, 1970), 69.

with his opera *Rinaldo* in 1711. In 1719, the foundation of the Royal Academy of Music with Handel as its director showed his star in the ascent; 1724, the year in which both *Giulio Cesare* and *Tamerlano* were composed, had Handel in complete control of opera production in London.

Two of the main characters in Handel's *Tamerlano* are Andronico, the Greek prince, and Eirene, Princess of Trebizond;[27] the others are Tamerlano himself, Bajazet and his daughter Asteria. Tamerlano, ruler of the Tartars, has defeated and captured Bajazet, the Ottoman sultan. Though betrothed to Eirene, princess of Trebizond, he has fallen in love with Asteria, the daughter of Bajazet, who loves and is loved by Andronico, a Byzantine princeling, general and ally of Bajazet. Tamerlano asks Andronico to plead his case with Asteria; in return, Andronico will be restored to rule in Byzantium and receive the hand of Eirene, princess of Trebizond. Tamerlano also promises to release Bajazet, who (in captivity and despair) wishes only to die. Despite being shocked by Andronico's apparent fickleness, Asteria pretends to accept Tamerlano's suit, to her father's horror. However, for the loyal daughter, this is a means to gain close access to Tamerlano, whom she intends to kill. Tamerlano vows to have both Bajazet and Asteria executed. Then he recovers his nobility as an Enlightenment prince and renews his offer to marry Asteria, for it to be rejected by Andronico, who now proclaims his own love for Asteria. Tamerlano again swears revenge. At a banquet, Asteria – now a slave – tries to poison Tamerlano, but is foiled by Eirene. Bajazet is driven to suicide and in a long monologue he calls on the furies to take vengeance on Tamerlano. The death of Bajazet, however, takes the heat from Tamerlano

[27] 'Chapter 23: Tamerlano', in Winton Dean and John Merrill Knapp, *Handel's Operas 1704–1726* (Oxford, 1987), 527–71. 'The story of the collision of two mighty conquerors Timur or Tamerlane (1333–1405), the Tartar from Central Asia, and Bajazet (1347–1403, Sultan from 1389), the Ottoman Turk defeated by Tamerlane in 1402 and imprisoned until his death [fn '*Tamerlano* was the most recent in date of Handel's "historical" operas, which, of course have little connection with history'] had long been popular in the theatre. It was the subject of Marlowe's first play, *Tamburlaine the Great* (Part 1, 1587), and verse dramas by Jacques Pradon (*Tamerlan ou La Mort de Bajazet*, 1675) in France and Nicholas Rowe (*Tamerlane*, 1702) in England. Rowe's play, which has no operatic links, was staged in London on 4 and 5 November every year for many decades, sometimes at two, three, or four theatres simultaneously. The reason was political: the dates were the anniversaries of William III's birth and his landing at Torbay in 1688, and Rowe's portrait of Tamerlane as a calm philosopher prince was intended as a symbolic image of the King. That Handel chose the same season for both his productions of *Tamerlano* was presumably a coincidence; none of his performances coincided with the two anniversaries'. Dean and Merrill Knapp, *Handel's Operas 1704–1726*, 531.

and he pardons Asteria, giving her in marriage to Andronico whilst he marries Eirene.

The source history for Handel's *opera seria Tamerlano* is complex. In July 1724 Handel wrote a complete setting for the libretto written by Piovene in 1711, as altered by Haym, Handel's librettist of choice (it is usually assumed that Haym wrote under close direction from Handel). Agostino Piovene's 1711 libretto claimed Michael Doukas's fifteenth-century history for the captivity of Bajazet after Ankara in 1402 and his suicide, Tamerlane's alliance with the Byzantines and his final appeasement. Since Handel's collaborator Haym took over Piovene's preface verbatim, it can be quoted in the English translation of the 1724 libretto:

> It is pretty currently believed, that, after the Imprisonment of Bajazet, Tamerlane was wont to make use of him as a Footstool to mount his Horse, that he inclosed him in an Iron Cage, and caused his Wife to wait upon him at Table, stark naked. The Authors of greatest Credit, give us not one Syllable of all this; and there are many again, who assert all these Accounts to be intensely fabulous and chimerical. But, notwithstanding all this, I, who am not undertaking to write a History, but to give a Turn to Tragedy, which may render it more pleasing in the Representation, have made free use of the abovemention'd Fables, and after shaping and forming them consonant to the Decorum of the Theatre, and bringing them within the Rules of Probability, I use them, as proper Motives and Mediums, in carrying on that main Action, which has, for its End, the Death of Bajazet.[28]

The 'love-interest' themes came from Pradon's play, whose main source was Laonicus Chalcondyles's 10-volume *History of Byzantium from 1298 to 1463*, first translated into French in 1577, though Eirene, princess of Trebizond was his own invention. Andronicus was a historical character, but only Chalcondyles makes him the refugee son of the Greek emperor; in his account, Andonicus's eyes were put out by boiling vinegar.[29]

Handel wrote a complete setting of Piovene's 1711 libretto, modified by Haym in July 1724. In the autumn, he rewrote the work, based on the 1719 libretto and taking into account that Borosini (a tenor) would sing the role of Bajazet (in which he had had a great success in Venice).[30] In *opera seria* tenors

[28] Dean and Merrill Knapp, *Handel's Operas 1704–1726*, 532.
[29] Dean and Merrill Knapp, *Handel's Operas 1704–1726*, 533 at footnote 15.
[30] Dean and Merrill Knapp, *Handel's Operas 1704–1726*, 534–5.

and basses played autocrats, old men and fathers. Bajazet is all three; but he is also in every sense – musical and dramatic – the hero of the opera. Its central theme is of course not the love story but the relationship between Bajazet and Asteria, father and daughter, to which Handel gives a near-Verdian intensity.[31] The end result is a triumph of an opera.

The conventions of *opera seria* remain. The setting is distant – but note it is now historical, not mythological. The characters are all dynasts and act 'nobly'. Social distinctions loom large and cannot be bridged (Eirene despises Asteria as a slave, although she is the daughter of an ex-emperor; Bajazet despises Tamerlano as the son of a shepherd). Monarchs are accustomed to make alliances of convenience, and Tamerlano does not know his destined bride by sight. The nominal hero's dramatic change of heart in the final scene does not convince a modern audience, but it was a conventional part of the genre and was expected. Handel gives it a novel twist by making Tamerlano magnanimous, giving Asteria to Andronico with a restored Byzantium and taking Eirene for himself.[32]

There are other novelties that distinguish *Tamerlano* from more pedestrian examples of the genre: there are deviations, repetitions and hesitations, but the dramatic action moves forward steadily.[33] The action takes place completely within Tamerlano's palace and there are no pastoral interludes[34] (to compare it with Thomas Arne's much later *Alfred*, for example). The 'exit with aria' convention is also relaxed: Act III sees two arias immediately followed by the singer's exit from the stage; eight other exits are effected without aria.[35] At the end of Act II, however, Handel makes brilliant use of the convention as Bajazet, Andronico and Eirene each exit in turn after singing an arietta, leaving the stage to Asteria alone, who, dramatically in full control, ends the act with a full aria.[36]

As a Byzantinist, I see Byzantium where I want to see it, perhaps. Eve Meyer has located this opera within the tradition of *turquerie* within Western Europe[37] (another expression of Orientalism, of course in the context of the widening imperial adventures of the East Indies trading companies), rather

[31] Dean and Merrill Knapp, *Handel's Operas 1704–1726*, 538.
[32] Dean and Merrill Knapp, *Handel's Operas 1704–1726*, 537.
[33] Dean and Merrill Knapp, *Handel's Operas 1704–1726*, 537.
[34] Dean and Merrill Knapp, *Handel's Operas 1704–1726*, 537.
[35] Dean and Merrill Knapp, *Handel's Operas 1704–1726*, 538.
[36] Dean and Merrill Knapp, *Handel's Operas 1704–1726*, 538.
[37] Eve R. Meyer, 'Turquerie and Eighteenth-Century Music', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 7 (1974), 474–88.

than attempting to establish a tradition of 'Byzance après Byzance'. Tamerlano, written in 20 days in July 1724, clearly comes long before the impact of Edward Gibbon and his *Decline and Fall* on English sensibilities. One might hope, therefore for a more positive view of Byzantium in the opera, but the speed of its composition and its reliance on multiple sources rather indicates that the need was for a plot and characters used to provide the vehicle for the singers imported by Handel to astound the London audiences.

Gaetano Donizetti's *Belisario* (1836)

Leaping forward a little over a century, I turn to the work of Gaetano Donizetti (1797–1848). Born in Bergamo on 29 November 1797,[38] Donizetti studied music at Bergamo under the Bavarian Johann Simon Mayr (1763–1845). Mayr had launched his career in Venice and then moved to Bergamo in 1802 as *maestro di cappella* at Santa Maria Maggiore. Mayr started a music school under his direction, paid for by the civic authorities.[39] Mayr was the enduring formative influence on Donizetti. 'Mayr refrained from addressing Donizetti as Maestro until he felt that his former pupil had truly proved himself a "master composer" – with *Anna Bolena* (in 1830, when Donizetti had written 30 operas)'.[40] Donizetti produced his first opera (number one of 68!) at Venice in 1818. The conventions of opera in Italy remained – broadly speaking – those of *opera seria*, though Donizetti's works are more usually classified as *bel canto*. This describes the method of singing taught in Italy, 'in which smooth emission of tone, beauty of timbre and elegance of phrasing are among the most important elements'.[41] His composition of *Gabriella* in 1826 was the first clear step away from the conventions of *opera seria* to a more 'Romantic' melodrama.

[38] William Ashbrook, *Donizetti and his Operas* (Cambridge and London, 1982), 3. 'His eldest brother, Giuseppe (6 November 1788 – 12 February 1856), became a musician. The musical instruction he received from his uncle Corini and from Mayr equipped him to embark on a career as a military bandsman. After service with the French and Sardinian forces, he moved in 1828 to Constantinople, where he accepted an appointment as Chief of Music to the Ottoman Armies, first under Sultan Mahmud II and then under Sultan Abdul Medjid, by whom he was made a pasha'. Ashbrook, *Donizetti and his Operas*, 4.

[39] Ashbrook, *Donizetti and his Operas*, 4.

[40] Ashbrook, *Donizetti and his Operas*, 5.

[41] Charles Osborne, *The Bel Canto Operas of Rossini, Donizetti and Bellini* (London, 1994), 3.

Belisario is an *opera seria* in three acts. It received its *prima* at the Teatro La Fenice, Venice on 4 February 1836.[42] Before the season ended, *Belisario* had achieved a run of either 17 or 28 performances.[43] The first London performance was on 1 April 1837 (it is this London performance that allows me to include *Belisario* in this review of 'English' opera), followed by 29 July 1843 at Philadelphia and 14 February 1844 in New York. It was produced in Koblenz in 1899, but subsequently there were no performances until the revival at La Fenice, Venice in 1969,[44] at Bergamo on 7 October 1970 and in Naples on 25 January 1973.[45] The characters are Belisario (baritone), his wife Antonina (soprano), Giustiniano the emperor (bass), Alamiro (Belisario's son in disguise, a tenor) and Eirene, Belisario's daughter (mezzo-soprano). The libretto is by Salvatore Cammarano. *Belisario* was received with great enthusiasm at its premiere and received a further 17 performances that season.

The synopsis of the opera gives much scope to melodrama, but it pays little attention to Byzantine history. The triumphant Belisario is denounced by his wife Antonina to the emperor Giustiniano. A captive elects to remain with Belisario and is adopted by him as his son. The newly adopted son Alamiro swears vengeance for his father's exile and blinding. Belisario and his daughter Eirene overhear Alamiro plotting vengeance. Belisario and Alamiro are reconciled and Eirene identifies Alamiro as her long-lost brother (and therefore Belisario's natural son). Belisario and Alamiro defend Byzantium from attack, but Belisario is mortally wounded and receives Antonina's confession.[46] The opera's three acts are each given titles: *Il Trionfo* (Triumph), *L'Esilio* (Exile) and *La Morte* (Death). The overture to Act 1 is tuneful, but critics have held it to be at odds with the subject matter of the opera. The 'jaunty chorus' that both precedes and follows Giustiniano's dull arioso seems out of place as the introduction to the ceremonial *adventus* of the Byzantine emperor. The first act duet, '*Quando di sangue tinto*', in which Belisario and Alamiro, unaware that they are father and son, swear to remain united forever, is the nearest approach to a love duet in this opera, notable for the absence of romantic love.[47] Alamiro's vigorous cabaletta, '*Trema Bisanzio, sterminatrice*', when the adoptive son announces his intention to wreak vengeance on perfidious Byzantium, is perhaps the high-point of 'Byzantium' in the

[42] Ashbrook, *Donizetti and his Operas*, 106.
[43] Osborne, *Bel Canto Operas*, 245–6; Ashbrook, *Donizetti and his Operas*, 107.
[44] Osborne, *Bel Canto Operas*, 246.
[45] Ashbrook, *Donizetti and his Operas*, 107.
[46] Ashbrook, *Donizetti and his Operas*, 561, Osborne, *Bel Canto Operas*, 246.
[47] Ashbrook, *Donizetti and his Operas*, 384.

opera when it is mentioned clearly and openly, but the opera's plot has little beyond the characters to do with the Byzantium of Justinian that we know from Prokopios – even the more outrageous versions of the *Anekdota*. 'Trema Bisanzio!' serves its purpose here in creating a certain genuine (if old-fashioned *opera seria*) air of heroic excitement, moving this particular plot along.[48]

Though *Belisario* is an imposing score, and marks a staging post in the development of *bel canto* opera to the fully fledged operatic Romanticism of Verdi, the opera compared with Donizetti's oeuvre is not a masterwork, surprising as it comes after *Lucia di Lammermoor*.[49] Though perhaps unfair (though not impossible given the critiques of intentionality), *Belisario*, as a vehicle for Byzantium, is singularly lacking. As was the case for Handel's *Tamerlano*, the purpose of the Byzantine background, setting and characters is merely to provide a grab-bag of settings and stock characters that can then be used and motivated without any real recourse to the realities of Byzantine history, either as it was understood in the early nineteenth century, or as we understand it now. The characters in Donizetti's *Belisario* remain little more than ciphers – scheming wife, honourable hero wronged, devoted daughter, adopted son more loyal than wife. There is no real development in the characters and none changes because of specifically Byzantine motivations. Their actions, to the extent that they can be ascertained and be said to be 'logical', rest in the universals of the human condition, not because of any *Byzantine* reason.

Massenet's *Esclarmonde* (1889)

Esclarmonde was written by Massenet (1842–1912) for the Universal Exhibition in 1889, for the voice and charms of Sibyl Sanderson. It tells of the beautiful magician who becomes empress of Byzantium and falls in love with the knight Roland. He loves her without ever seeing her face.[50] *Esclarmonde* is Grand Opera in the best tradition, with Joan Sutherland in the title role in performances in 1974, 1976 and 1983. The outline of the plot shows that we are far from any real connection with Byzantine history no matter how it might be construed, based as it is on a medieval legend. The emperor of Byzantium, Phorcas (*sic*), a magician, has decided to abdicate in

[48] Ashbrook, *Donizetti and his Operas*, 384.

[49] Osborne, *Bel Canto Operas*, 247–8.

[50] Michel Pazdero, 'Vue d'ensemble', *L'Avant Scène Opéra*, Number 148, *Esclarmonde*, Massenet, September–October 1992, 3.

favour of his daughter Esclarmonde, whom he has instructed in his magical arts. To retain these powers and her throne, she must remain veiled to all men until her twentieth birthday at which time a tournament will be held, the victor wining her hand. Phorcas charges Pareis – Esclarmonde's sister – as her guard. Esclarmonde, however, is in love with Roland, a dashing French knight. Hearing that he is soon to be married to the daughter of the king of France, Esclarmonde invokes the powers of air, water and fire to enable an assignation. Esclarmonde and Roland meet, and vow their love for each other, though Esclarmonde stipulates that Roland must never see her face. Esclarmonde gives Roland the sword of St George, reminds him to keep his promise and vows to join him each night. Blois is in ruins, with the king, Cleomer, helpless before Sarwegur, the Saracen leader. Roland saves the day (and the 100 virgins) but rejects the king's daughter Bathilde as a reward. Though the king pardons him, the bishop of Blois determines to find out the cause. The bishop forces the truth from Roland and tells him he is bewitched. Esclarmonde then appears, and the bishop attempts an exorcism, tearing the veil from her face. The bishop orders his attendants to seize her. Roland attempts to protect her, but the sword of St George shatters. Esclarmonde calls on air, water and fire to protect her and vanishes, denouncing Roland's faithlessness. In a dramatic change of scene, Pareis has come in search of her father Phorcas, the ex-*basileus* who is living as an anchorite in the forest of the Ardennes (as you do). Phorcas assumes his powers once more and summons Esclarmonde to him. She is to lose her powers and the throne; and unless she renounces Roland as well, he will die. Esclarmonde gives up Roland, who, now wishing only for death, joins the rest of the troop going to Byzantium for the tournament. A black knight, who says his name is Despair, is the victor of the tournament. Esclarmonde recognises the sound of his voice and when the emperor Phorcas commands her to unveil him, Roland – for, gentle hearers, it is he – now recognises her with delight. The curtain falls, with all praising Empress Esclarmonde and her consort Roland.

As far as the story goes, there is nothing really about Byzantium at all apart from the odd variant name and the fact that it is an empire far far away, long ago. *Esclarmonde* is Grand Opera, but the significant feature is that Massenet achieves Grand Opera with remarkable dispatch – all in under two hours. One feature of this Grand Opera, making use of the age-old plot of 'girl meets boy, plus problems', is that the girl gets to keep the boy at the end. Happy endings are rare enough in opera that they are to be treasured. In musical development some have seen some 'Wagnerian' characteristics in Massenet's score. However, this is overstated and rests more in the Grand Opera tradition (large orchestra,

'cast of thousands' and massed scenes often military in nature). Neither Massenet nor Wagner existed in cultural vacuums, but borrowings needs to be overt rather than the identification of mere similarities. As the real source of the opera is a medieval *chanson de geste*, *Parthenopoeus de Blois*, and as the name suggests a large part of the action takes place in the west around Blois (where they are fighting off the Saracens), it is perhaps stretching a point to say that it is a 'Byzantine' opera, though it is as 'real' as any of the others. A Grand Opera when the woman sets out to get her man, wins him and keeps him deserves some mention.[51] It is not my intention in this chapter to attempt a complete survey of all operas using Byzantine locations or characters within the French tradition; there are many, but, as with the case of *Esclarmonde*, the flavour is a hint of the exotic, not an attempt to render Byzantium in opera in any real sense.

Siegfried Wagner's *Sonnenflammen* (composed 1911–1912; first performed 1918)

Siegfried Wagner was born on 6 June 1869 and died on 4 August 1930.[52] He was the only son of Richard Wagner, as well as being the grandson of Franz Liszt; he was the father of Wieland Wagner.[53] Once 'ein Sohn ist da!',[54] it was almost inevitable that he would follow a career in music, studying with Liszt, Ernst Hausburg and later Humperdinck. He was Artistic Director at Bayreuth from 1906 until 1930. Given the expectations vested in Siegfried (the person, not the opera – though how can we tease them apart?) by his father, it should be no surprise that his grandfather described him as a 'queer/strange/odd youth' (*merkwürdiger Junge*),[55] nor that all his 18 operas for which – like his father before him[56] – he wrote the libretti as well as the music, deal mainly with the irrational or supernatural in exotic historical settings and many could be deemed Freudian.[57]

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[51] Rodney Milnes, 'Esclarmonde', *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, ed. Stanley Sadie (London and New York, 1994), vol. 2, 77.

[52] Gunter-Kornagel, *Weltbild in Siegfried Wagners Opern*, 14.

[53] Peter P. Pachl, *Siegfried Wagner. Genie im Schatten: mit Opernführer, Werkverzeichnis, Diskographie und 154 Abbildungen* (Munich, 1988), 9.

[54] Pachl, *Genie im Schatten*, 15.

[55] Pachl, *Genie im Schatten*, 27.

[56] Gunter-Kornagel, *Weltbild in Siegfried Wagners Opern*, 15–16.

[57] Grove New Dictionary of Opera 1085a.

Sonnenflammen is an opera in three acts. Acts 1 and 2 were composed in 1911; Act 3 was composed in 1912.[58] The action takes place in Byzantium at the start of the thirteenth century, apparently before the Crusaders' conquest in 1204, as the emperor bears the name 'Alexios' and appears to be an amalgam of the Byzantine emperors Alexios III Angelos (1195–1203; 1204 in Thrace) and Alexios IV Angelos (1203–1204).

Sonnenflammen with its location, characters and plot clearly attempts to be a Byzantine opera. Set in Byzantium (allegedly) before the Fourth Crusade, with ample numbers of Crusaders or Westerners, the plot is complex but is firmly concerned with the personal. Though convoluted, the plot is basically one of 'boy meets girl, lots of alarums and excursions, boy fails to get girl'. The opera opens with some attempt at social realist critique as the emperor and his court are shown making sport of a beggar. This is part of Wagner's construction of the emperor as the embodiment of everything that is wrong with the world, but in the opera it is not really followed through in the plot nor is there any plot development to suggest how things might be changed or indeed to offer any hope of any change. The actions and development of Fridolin, the Frankish crusader, show that, whilst his voice is that of the Heldentenor, his actions are not 'heroic' and in the end he is more of an antihero. The themes are of personal immorality – hardness of heart and adultery, broken words and forsworn oaths, betrayed belovèds – and with the exception of the heroine Iris, all the main protagonists are killed or seek death in self-immolation worthy (in plot at least) of *Götterdämmerung*, as puppets of the king of France, the German emperor, the Venetian doge and the pope are burnt; the ghost of Eirene appears to Alexios and tells him he has had sex with Eunroe not Iris and that no heir will result; Alexios seeks death by engaging the crusaders who are now attacking the city; Fridolin commits suicide, though dying he declares his love for Iris. The powerless Iris was saved from the flames but Fridolin's body lay forgotten in the rubble of the collapsing empire ['Fridolins Leiche liegt verlassen in den Trümmern des untergehenden Kaiserreiches'].[59]

Whilst this may be great art (though its performance history suggests that few regard it so[60]), it has little or nothing to do with Byzantium per se. The Byzantine setting is merely used as the oriental, decadent backdrop against

[58] Gunter-Kornagel, *Weltbild in Siegfried Wagners Opern*, 136.

[59] Pachl, *Genie im Schatten*, 481–4. See also Gunter-Kornagel, *Weltbild in Siegfried Wagners Opern*, 136–40.

[60] *Sonnenflammen* has not had a long and distinguished performance history (1918 Darmstadt, 1919 Schwerin and Hamburg, 1920 Nürnberg and Dresden, 1979 Wiesbaden (concert performance); see Gunter-Kornagel, *Weltbild in Siegfried Wagners Opern*, 15).

which Siegfried Wagner is able to project his characters. The parent–child relationships portrayed in the opera provide much material for possible Freudian analysis. The extent to which the experience of the illegitimate son of whom so much was expected is embedded in the opera is open to debate. Fridolin, the 'hero', displays few characteristics to be emulated; his death-wish arises from despair, not from self-sacrifice for some greater good. Iris as a character is positive to a degree, but her lack of development in the opera means that she remains largely a cipher and essentially powerless. Similarly, Empress Eirene serves as a personification of anomie, suicide being the only answer to the decadency of the 'Byzantine' court. 'From the start of the opera, Siegfried Wagner portrays imperial splendour and lascivious and corrupt moral structure'.[61] This Byzantine setting of imperial splendour that contains within it ultimate corruption is a background against which Wagner is able to project his views; but as before, it says nothing really about Byzantium. As Albrecht Berger shows in Chapter 6 in the present volume, Ludwig II King of Bavaria was greatly taken with the ideas of Byzantine imperial splendour, using it as the inspiration of the interior decoration of Neuschwanstein, even as the exterior of the same castle seems lifted from the scenery of a Wagnerian (*Vater*) opera.

The relationship between Richard Wagner and Ludwig II der Traumkönig is one thing; the relationship of expectation between Richard Wagner and Siegfried Wagner is another. Historians are wary (rightly) of psychoanalysis without the presence of the client, but it seems likely that there were unresolved father issues for Siegfried Wagner. Though Byzantium was again a quarry for ideas and images to be used and moulded by the opera composer, it was not for any intention of creating an image of Byzantium that reflected the increasing understanding of the period, empire and civilisation. Rather, it was again a distant backdrop against which the composer could project his concerns and desires.

John Tavener's *Mary of Egypt* (1991)

John Tavener was born in London in 1944, the scion of an established family of builders, with his father serving as a church organist. He died in 2013.

There were revivals in 1921 in Coburg, 1923 in Schwerin and 1938 in Düsseldorf: Peter P. Pachl, *Siegfried Wagners musikdramatisches Schaffen* (Tutzing, 1979), 158.

[61] 'Gleich zu Beginn der Oper demonstriert Siegried Wagner kaiserliche Prachtentfaltung und schwül-korrupte Moralstruktur'. Gunter-Kornagel, *Weltbild in Siegfried Wagners Opern*, 142.

His composing career was unorthodox (the cantata *The Whale* 1966, *Ultimos Ritos* 1972 and the 'sacred opera' *Therese* 1979) but since his conversion in the late 1970s to Russian Orthodoxy he was religiously Christian Orthodox, even if in the later years of his life he appeared to be less strictly Orthodox and more, as he described himself in an interview in 2010, as 'essentially Orthodox'. Taking part in the BBC Radio 4 programme *Start the Week* recorded shortly before his death and broadcast on 11 November 2013, he stated that, whilst wanting to explore the musical traditions of other faiths, he remained an Orthodox Christian. His first 'Orthodox' composition was a setting of the Liturgy of St John Chrysostom (1977).[62] Much of his musical output has been shaped by his exposure to Russian liturgical music, heir as it is to the Byzantine tradition.

With *St Mary of Egypt*, we are on firmer ground with the synopsis as Byzantinists. Derived from her own translation (with Mother Katherine) of the text, Mother Thekla provided the libretto (on the fifth attempt) under guidance from Tavener. Mother Thekla had provided texts for both *The Protecting Veil* (1989) and *The Song for Athene* (1993). Additionally Mother Thekla was Tavener's confessor until she died in 2011. Their collaboration was one of long standing. The story of *St Mary of Egypt* is well known. Mary, a prostitute in Alexandria, goes on pilgrimage to Jerusalem, 'working her passage'. Prevented from entering a church in Jerusalem, Mary turns from sin and lives in the desert as a hermit. After 47 years in the desert Mary meets Zossima; they bless each other and Mary asks for Zossima to return in a year's time to give her Communion. One year later again Zossima returns to find Mary dead and buries her with the help of wild animals.

The work was envisioned as an 'ikon in words and music' rather than as an opera as such. As befits Mother Thekla's status as a religious, her involvement presses home the idea that the story of Mary of Egypt has nothing to do with sensuality; rather it deals with love misplaced, suffering, and repentance leading to redemption.[63] In contrast, for John Tavener, it seems clear that the story of Mary of Egypt and the performance of creating it was deeply connected with his relationship with his own mother, with his notions of love and sex, and with his troubled relationship with his muse. In his private life, there was a separation of the physical from the emotional and most of his

[62] Anastasia Tsioulcas, 'Remembering "Holy Minimalist" Composer John Tavener', 12 November 2013, at http://www.npr.org/blogs/deceptivecadence/2013/11/12/244788638/remembering-holy-minimalist-composer-john-ta (last accessed 13 April 2014).

[63] Piers Dudgeon, *Lifting the Veil: The Biography of Sir John Tavener* (London, 2003), 105.

relationships with women (including his marriage) ended badly. The work is an attempt to work out what a 'real' connection should mean. On Tavener's part (though obviously not for Mother Thekla) St Mary of Egypt embodies a divine passion of ecstatic love for God. But this *eros* either transforms or is repressed and sublimated.[64]

Here, the basic subject matter is Byzantine – the story of the Life of St Mary of Egypt. In its realisation as a 'musical ikon', however, there are several layers of interpretation. For Mother Thekla it is about the search for the divine; for Tavener himself it is more about relationships – in his case, troubled relationships with his mother and his first wife. Overtly this is not about Byzantium; as with the other art-works considered here, Byzantium is a shadowy starting point from which the artist begins his journey of composition.

Conclusions

The first obvious conclusion is that there was no Byzantine opera. Secondly, with no tradition, there is no figured base unifying operas in the Western tradition set in Byzantium; there is no 'Byzantine style' in opera. Byzantium is used as an 'exotic' location in an 'exotic' art-form. I have used five easily identified 'Byzantine' operas, and there are many more (I have not done the full tally for the 28,015 operas identified by Towers in 1910). This leads on to the third point: Byzantium is a setting not limited to any period, form or genre of the Western operatic tradition. Byzantium can serve as a setting for *opera seria*, for *bel canto*, for Grand Opera, for twentieth-century psychological works and for more esoteric experimental works. However, whilst Byzantium may serve as a location for any of these types of operatic performance, it is a Byzantium cut loose from its moorings in time and the historical sources. The themes portrayed in operas set in Byzantium are not supposed to elucidate Byzantine history – and this is just as well, for they do not. Rather, the exotic setting provides an opportunity to consider universalised themes of the human condition: love, loss, anger, betrayal, loyalty, friendship, family.

[64] Dudgeon, *Lifting the Veil*, 108.

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Chapter 6
Byzantium in Bavaria

Albrecht Berger[1]

The reception of Byzantine culture and arts in Germany from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries differed significantly from that in France and England. This difference can clearly be identified as being for political reasons. The concept of a universal Christian empire, as can be seen in the reception of Byzantium by the French absolutism, played a minor role in Germany, which had by this time disintegrated into a large number of politically powerless mini-states. If a German prince tried in any way to make universal claims, he attempted to do this by imitating the French absolutist monarchy and the legitimising ideology associated with it, as had emerged in the time of Louis XIV.

The preconditions for a direct Byzantine influence on Germany culture were only created in the early nineteenth century when, in the wake of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars, France was no longer viewed as a direct cultural and political paradigm for the ruling class in Germany. The romantic idealisation of Germany's own medieval past encouraged the emergence of historicising tendencies in art and architecture. At the same time, society was changing and becoming more modernised thanks to industrialisation and the emergence of the working class, by the construction of railways and other technological developments. Democratic reforms were claimed by parts of the bourgeoisie, while the influence of the church decreased. As a reaction to these developments, individual rulers like Frederick William IV of Prussia and Ludwig I of Bavaria attempted through the medium of art to preserve the old order, or at least to compensate for these dramatic social changes. Building in the Byzantine style apparently evoked, in this context, the memory of the Byzantine Empire, as it was then seen in conservative monarchist circles, namely as a symbol for an empire with a Christian ruler of God's grace, where church and state were united without religious disputes.

[1] Ludwig-Maximillian University of Munich.

The first buildings in Germany constructed in a 'Byzantine style' in the early nineteenth century were actually based on northern Italian models, for the Byzantine monuments of Turkey and Greece were still little known. A typical example for this broad understanding of a 'Byzantine' style is its reception in Prussia by King Friedrich Wilhelm IV. On his orders, the Church of Peace (the *Friedenskirche*) in Potsdam was built between 1845 and 1848 in a style that today would be called early Romanesque, but was then regarded as Byzantine, and was decorated with a medieval apse mosaic bought in Venice.[2] The king's brother, Prince Karl of Prussia, also brought 'Byzantine' art objects to Berlin from his travels through northern Italy and gathered them in a small cloister – without an abbey – built in 1850 especially for this purpose in the park of Glienicke near Potsdam.[3]

The architectural reception of Byzantium in Bavaria had already begun before these Prussian buildings, with the *Hofkirche* of All Saints (*Allerheiligen-Hofkirche*) in Munich, which was begun soon after the accession of King Ludwig I to the throne in 1825.[4]

Ludwig I was an enthusiastic admirer of Italian culture and antiquities, and so he travelled there several times while he was still the crown prince. His visits included Venice, Rome, Naples and Sicily. In Venice and in Palermo, when he and his company were first confronted with Byzantine art, he was deeply impressed by it. His personal physician, Johann Nepomuk von Ringseis, writes in his memoires:

> I have seen in Palermo in the royal palace and in Montereale [Monreale] churches in the Byzantine style, and cannot deny that they pleased me and put me in the mood for prayer. All walls full of mosaic with much gold in it, all figures on golden ground, so much expression of piety, earnest and noble simplicity in the pictures of the Saviour and the saints, despite all defectiveness of the drawing, and altogether so much unpretentiousness that every unbiased person must be moved, and that is much.[5]

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[2] S. Badstübner-Gröger, *Die Friedenskirche zu Potsdam*, Das christliche Denkmal, 85 (Berlin, 1972); R. S. Nelson, *Hagia Sophia 1850–1950: Holy Wisdom, Modern Monument* (Chicago, IL, 2004).

[3] See G. H. Zuchold, *Byzanz in Berlin. Der Klosterhof im Schlosspark Glienicke* (Berlin, 1984); Nelson, *Hagia Sophia*, 42–5.

[4] G.-A. Haltrich, *Leo von Klenze. Die Allerheiligenhofkirche in München*, Miscellanea Bavarica Monacensia, 115 (Munich, 1983); A. von Buttlar, *Leo von Klenze* (Munich, 1999), 232–42.

[5] *Erinnerungen des Dr. Johann Nepomuk v. Ringseis*, ed. E. Ringseis, vol. 4 (Regensburg and Amberg, 1886–1891), I, 445.

And he adds that Ludwig was so impressed by the Palatine Chapel of Palermo that he exclaimed spontaneously when he left it after the Christmas service in 1817, 'Such a chapel I wish to have!'[6]

Eight years later, shortly after his second trip to Sicily in 1824, Ludwig I became King of Bavaria on his father's death, and almost immediately gave the order to build the new court-chapel of Munich. The designated architect for this project was Leo von Klenze; and here the problems began, for Klenze preferred the classic style and was anything but happy when he received the request to build, of all things, an imitation of the chapel in Palermo.

The medieval architecture of Sicily received its stylistic peculiarity from the fact that the kingdom of the Normans emerged there and in southern Italy in the late eleventh century by the conquest of territories that had previously been partly under Langobardic, partly under Byzantine and partly under Arab domination, and Palermo had been the capital of an Islamic emirate for more than 250 years. As a result of these overlapping influences, the Norman buildings in Sicily were erected in a very eclectic and unbalanced style, with elements of the older Romanesque, Byzantine and Arab–Islamic art. Thus, the Palatine Chapel in Palermo was built on a conventional western European plan, but with a dome in Byzantine style decorated with mosaics, and a nave with an Islamic 'stalactite' ceiling.[7] It would have been an unreasonable imposition to require the imitation of such a building, from any other architect of the time, never mind from Klenze, the possessor of such a distinctive architectural style.

We are well informed about the planning, construction and subsequent maintenance of this church by Klenze's correspondence with the king. Klenze tried to talk the king out of his project in Norman–Byzantine style, suggesting a Renaissance design, but Ludwig was not willing to negotiate on this.[8] Klenze therefore had only one choice, namely to switch to other, less problematic, Byzantine models – with the consequence that the design finally accepted by Ludwig did not have much in common with the Cappella Palatina in Palermo.

Klenze wrote to the king about this design in August 1826: 'I am sure that there is no part neither inside nor outside that may not be called perfectly classical, and which your Majesty especially liked in Venice, Monreale and

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[6] Ringseis, *Erinnerungen*, I, 446.

[7] W. Tronzo, *The Cultures of his Kingdom: Roger II and the Cappella Palatina in Palermo* (Princeton, NJ, 1997).

[8] Von Buttlar, *Leo von Klenze*, 232–4.

Palermo'.[9] And in another letter to the king, he claimed that the design of the exterior facade was, 'except for small details, which cannot be expressed in the drawing, almost an exact replica of the cathedral of Palermo, which, as it seemed to me, your Majesty seemed to like particularly, and also may be the best model if one considers the dreadfulness of the lateral facades of San Marco, Monreale etc.'.[10]

In fact, the outer shell of the building shows the forms of Western medieval architecture, as the cathedrals of Palermo and Monreale do, and could therefore have served as a model for the exterior. The interior, however, has actually little to do with these churches or with San Marco in Venice. At best, one might think, the plan of the *Hofkirche* of All Saints, with its two consecutive domed bays supported by lateral transverse barrel vaults and galleries, could have been derived from San Marco by putting two arms of this cruciform church after one another. But in reality, Klenze constructed here a building type highly fashionable during his time, albeit in Byzantine disguise.

The church of Sainte Madeleine in Paris, which was built between 1818 and 1842, had a very similar interior with three consecutive domes, hidden behind the facade of a Greek temple, and was decorated in ancient Roman, not in Byzantine style.[11] This building soon became known in Germany, as shown, among other things, in the first draft of Karl Friedrich Schinkel's plans for the *Friedrichwerder* Church in Berlin dated to 1824, which was then actually built in the Gothic Revival style.[12] If we did not know the particular history of the *Hofkirche* of All Saints in Munich, we would probably assume that it was also intended as a copy of the Madeleine Church. Its interior was certainly Byzantine in style, even according to our modern conception, though it did not owe this to its architecture, but rather to the paintings done on a golden background.

All in all, one would probably have to admit that the annihilating verdict of Klenze's competitor Friedrich von Gärtner on the *Hofkirche* of All Saints was not completely unjustified. Gärtner said that the design was 'not worthy of a school boy', and continued, 'The exterior was 300 years younger than the interior, and so bad in respect to its aesthetic appearance that it is really inconceivable that a man of so many skills and talent can do something so

[9] *König Ludwig I. von Bayern und Leo von Klenze, Der Briefwechsel*, ed. H. Glaser et al., Quellen zur neueren Geschichte Bayerns, 5 (Munich, 2004–2011), II, 1, 147, letter dated 16 August 1826.

[10] Glaser et al., eds, *Briefwechsel*, II, 1, 174–5, letter dated 15 September 1826.

[11] A. Engbring-Strysch, *Die Madeleine-Kirche in Paris* (Essen, 1989).

[12] Von Buttlar, *Leo von Klenze*, 236.

absurd'.[13] Klenze himself was, admittedly, not quite so squeamish when it came to criticising Gärtner, for example, for his design and construction of the Church of Saint Louis, also in Munich.

Leo von Klenze distanced himself from this example of his own work. This can clearly be seen from his letter to King Ludwig I, already quoted. Ludwig himself, however, was very happy with 'his' Church of All Saints, so much that he preferred it in later years to the original architecture in Sicily. In a letter he wrote to Klenze years later, during his third trip to Palermo, he says:

> I am eager to see which impression the local castle chapel will make on me. The Cathedral of Monreale, which had made a great impression on me both times I was in Sicily, did no longer please me, being accustomed to the wonderful Chapel of All Saints built by you and adorned with frescoes by Mr Hess.[14]

And he continues his letter the following day, after visiting the palace chapel:

> I have seen it again, the chapel in the royal palace, which made a great impression on me, with its magnificent mosaic executed there. I would have liked to have that too, but you made the admittedly well-founded objection that it would be very costly.[15]

The fact that the Church of All Saints was decorated with frescoes, rather than with mosaics, seems to have depressed the king a little for years after its completion. Klenze actually responded to the letter with a review of the circumstances of the building:

> Indeed, the idea had emerged in the classical and grand ideas of your Majesty's artistic and constructive views to decorate the Chapel of All Saints in real mosaic. Your Majesty deigned to give me the order to make [...] and estimates, and even to go that purpose to Venice, where the school of great mosaic paintings has best been preserved. I reported about this that the decoration of the church would cost for the actual historical pictures alone, if I'm not mistaken, about 1½ million. Yet this sum would certainly have been increased by one million by using the same technique for ornaments, panelling and flooring. Your Majesty's most sublime decision was now to execute them *al fresco* –

13 Von Buttlar, *Leo von Klenze*, 237.

14 Glaser et al., eds, *Briefwechsel*, II, 4, 9, letter dated 11 March 1839.

15 Glaser et al., eds, *Briefwechsel*, II, 4, 10, letter dated 12 March 1839.

> but with the remark added that if your Majesty were the Emperor of Austria, nevertheless the mosaic would have been chosen.[16]

Lack of money was an obstacle to the desired effect of representation, which was then regarded as especially characteristic of the Byzantine style, and was not only a characteristic of the later projects in the time of Ludwig II. In fact, Klenze tried to console the king about this in a quite clever way, when he wrote, among other things,

> After all, its architectural design had to be quite different from the Chapel of Saint Roch in Palermo, according to the existing conditions and requirements, and if one would try to remove from it what could not, after all, be given to a newly built chapel, the venerable rust and dust and varnish of antiquity, I hardly think that it would make a more favourable lasting impression than the Chapel of All Saints.[17]

As we have seen, the Church of All Saints refers to Italian prototypes from the Norman kingdom and San Marco in Venice, and represents an architectural type that never actually existed in the Byzantine realm. However, this did not harm its impact on the reception of Byzantium in Bavaria that followed; on the contrary, it remained effective as a model also at a time when the art of the Byzantine Empire in the stricter sense had already become known in Germany and western Europe, for its design reappears in several projects of Ludwig II as an architectural pattern for throne rooms, as we shall presently see.

The *Hofkirche* of All Saints was severely damaged during the Second World War and stood for years as a ruin. The outer walls have been restored, but the decoration of the interior has been lost forever. Around the time when the *Hofkirche* of All Saints was built in Munich, a political development began, which resulted, during the following decades, in a new, more direct reception of Byzantine art in Europe.

In 1821 a rebellion broke out in Greece against the Ottomans, which in 1829 led, after a long struggle and with massive help from the Western powers, to the country gaining its independence. Ludwig I eagerly supported this liberation struggle, and it was his second son, Otto, who was finally installed in 1832 as King of Greece. A large number of western Europeans, including many Bavarians, came to Greece and became acquainted not only with the originals of ancient Greek art, but also with Byzantine art in a stricter sense.

[16] Glaser et al., eds, *Briefwechsel*, II, 4, 28, letter dated 28 April 1839.
[17] Glaser et al., eds, *Briefwechsel*, II, 4, 28, letter dated 28 April 1839.

The idealised image of Greece and the Greek culture, which had evolved over the centuries in the West, soon came into conflict with the very different reality of the nineteenth century. At that time, in fact, many Westerners and Greeks would have preferred to forget everything that had happened in Greece between the time of Pericles and the liberation from the Turks. Athens had declined to the status of a small town predominantly populated by ethnic Albanians, and only in the reign of King Otto was the city rebuilt anew in large part from 1834 onwards, and fitted out with buildings in the classical style.

However, there was no way to wipe out entirely the traces of Christianity in Athens, although the medieval architectural legacy was despised by many contemporaries. Many, though not all, major Byzantine churches in Athens survived the redesign, although at least in one case there was a prolonged controversy, namely whether the so-called Kapnikarea Church, which stood in the way when the new Hermou Street was built, should be demolished or not. The demolition did not take place, allegedly because of personal intervention by Ludwig I, and the church still stands today in the middle of the street.[18]

The loss of Greece was a heavy blow for Ottoman Turkey. When it happened, a transition began, which led, over time, to the loss of almost the entire Balkan peninsula. However, this decline for Ottoman Turkey was lessened by extensive internal reforms, begun in 1839 by Sultan Abdülmecid. The legal status of the Christian inhabitants of the empire was greatly improved, and foreign advisors and specialists were welcomed into the country. One consequence of this new policy was the sultan's request to two Swiss architects, Gaspare and Giuseppe Fossati, for a thorough restoration of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, which was carried out between 1847 and 1849.[19]

This restoration and the subsequent publication of its results by the Fossatis and by Heinrich Salzenberg, both in 1852,[20] was another important step to knowledge of Byzantine art. Now, finally, the basis was available for a more faithful imitation of Byzantine buildings – though it should still be noted that, until the turn of the twentieth century, the term 'Byzantine style' was often

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[18] A. Xyngopoulos, 'Καπνικαρέα', in *Μεγάλη Ἑλληνικὴ Ἐγκυκλοπαίδεια* 13 (1933), 747.

[19] V. Hoffmann, *Die Hagia Sophia in Istanbul. Bilder aus sechs Jahrhunderten und Gaspare Fossatis Restaurierung der Jahre 1847 bis 1849*, exhibition catalogue (Bern, 1999); S. Schlüter, *Gaspare Fossatis Restaurierung der Hagia Sophia in Istanbul*, Neue Berner Schriften zur Kunst, 6 (Bern, 1999); Nelson, *Hagia Sophia*, 29–32.

[20] G. Fossati, *Aya Sofia Constantinople, as recently restored by order of H. M. the Sultan Abdul Medjid* (London, 1852); W. Salzenberg, *Alt-christliche Baudenkmale von Constantinopel vom V. bis XII. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1854); see also Nelson, *Hagia Sophia*, 33–6.

used in a very generous sense: even the style of the Parisian church of *Sacré Coeur*, to name just one example, was described at the time of its construction in 1875 as 'Byzantine'.[21]

The reign of Ludwig I of Bavaria came to a sudden end in 1848, the year of the German revolution, and his son Maximilian II succeeded him on the throne. Maximilian also acted as a patron of the arts, but showed no interest in the construction of castles and churches in the Byzantine style. This changed, however, after his untimely death in 1864, when his son Ludwig II took over as ruler of Bavaria.

Ludwig II of Bavaria[22] was born in 1845, during the reign of his grandfather. Ludwig II did not view positively the democratic changes that arose in the period after the revolutions of 1848. Following his accession (but even more so following the collapse of the German Confederation in 1866, which resulted, among other things, in the formal independence of Bavaria), he developed fantastic and totally outmoded notions of absolute royal rule and divine right. They resulted in a strong admiration for Louis XIV of France, a country that he therefore visited several times and even more so in his later years.

After the Prussian victory over France in 1871, in which the southern German states including Bavaria were also involved, Ludwig was urged by his advisers and by the Prussian government against his express wishes to join the new German Empire, and it was he who had to offer the new German imperial crown to King Wilhelm I of Prussia in Versailles, because he was the king of the largest single state after Prussia, and also Wilhelm's nephew. After this, his psychological problems increased more and more. Ludwig retired from public life as much as possible and dealt almost exclusively with theatrical performances and numerous building projects, through which he tried to express his particular admiration for the German Middle Ages and French absolutism. Contact with the general population was lost almost completely, while the contact with the parliament and government was limited to the procurement of the necessary funds for his buildings. Finally, Ludwig was put under tutelage in 1886, because of his shyness and extravagance, and deposed;

[21] M. Kampouri-Vamvoukou, 'L'architecture de style néo-byzantin en France', in F. Auzépy, ed., *Byzance en Europe* (Paris, 2003), 87–100.

[22] The literature on the life and time of Ludwig II is vast, but only partially of a scientific nature; it is excessively fixated on the mysterious circumstances of his death. For two introductions to his life in English, see G. King, *The Mad King: The Life and Times of Ludwig II of Bavaria* (Secaucus, NJ, 1996); and W. Till, *Ludwig II King of Bavaria: Myth and Truth* (Vienna, 2010).

he died soon afterwards under mysterious circumstances, drowned in Lake Starnberg together with the psychiatrist Bernhard von Gudden – in certain circles of Bavaria it is still debated whether he was murdered, or committed suicide after having murdered his attendant.

Of the buildings actually erected by King Ludwig, the most famous now are the Herrenchiemsee and Linderhof castles, which imitate the French baroque style, and above all the castle of Neuschwanstein in the pseudo-medieval style. It is perhaps less well known that Ludwig also engaged with the Byzantine art, and that among his many construction projects there were also several built in the Byzantine style. Examples include the early drafts for Linderhof castle, a concept for a fortress in the vicinity, the throne room of Neuschwanstein, which was the only Byzantine project actually carried out during his reign, and the design for a bedroom in Falkenstein Castle.

The designs for a castle at Linderhof in Byzantine style dates to the years of 1869 and 1870.[23] The interest of Ludwig II in Byzantine art was inspired by two recently published works of popular nature, namely *The Byzantines of the Middle Ages* by Johann Heinrich Krause, and a section referring to the Byzantine period in the *History of Fine Arts* by Carl Schnaase.[24] The king writes about his reading of these books in a diary entry on 9 July 1869,[25] and they are probably identical to the two books about 'Byzantine style' that Ludwig mentions in a letter to Court Secretary Lorenz von Düfflipp on 13 April 1869, giving Düfflipp an order to send the two books to his architect, Georg von Dollmann, for study.[26] Dollmann was, by the way, married to a granddaughter of Leo von Klenze.

The detailed knowledge of Ludwig and his architects, however, about the imperial palace of Constantinople, as can be understood from this project, is apparently based on the edition of the *Book of Ceremonies* by Johann Jakob Reiske printed in 1829.[27] In Ludwig's legacy in the Secret House Archives of Bavaria, a series of handwritten translations from the *Book of Ceremonies* into German is preserved. They include chapters about imperial coronations,

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[23] H. Kreisel, *The Castles of Ludwig II of Bavaria* (Darmstadt, 1955), 43–5; G. Baumgartner, *Königliche Träume. Ludwig II. und seine Bauten* (Munich, 1981), 229–38.

[24] J. H. Krause, *Die Byzantiner des Mittelalters* (Halle, 1864, repr. Leipzig, 1974); C. Schnaase, *Geschichte der Bildenden Künste*, 2nd edn, vol. 3 (Düsseldorf, 1869), 105–301, especially 168–72 on the Imperial Palace in the middle Byzantine period.

[25] H. G. Evers, *Ludwig II. Theaterfürst, König, Bauherr* (Munich, 1986), 119.

[26] Baumgartner, *Königliche Träume*, 230.

[27] *Constantini Porphyrogeniti De cerimoniis aulae byzantinae*, ed. J. J. Reiske (Bonn, 1829).

receptions held for foreign ambassadors and, above all, the hippodrome games in Constantinople, while descriptions of religious ceremonies and processions through the city were ignored. These translations are neither signed nor dated, but were probably made in connection with the project from the years 1869/70.[28]

In the course of the planning of this palace, that is, from the first to sixth draft,[29] the size and room programme was steadily expanded. In front of the main building, a driveway for visitors and a patio was to be located; the main building itself, which was called a *Basilica* in the master plan, had four wings around two consecutive inner courtyards separated by an open colonnade, and lateral extensions at both sides. It was to contain a number of state rooms, which bore names borrowed from the imperial palace of Constantinople.

Through the *Sigma* a staircase leads to the *Onopus*, from which octagons at both sides provide access to the *Triclinium of the Exurbitores* (*sic*[30]) and to the *Consistorium* to the left, and to *Delphacus* and *Chalke* in the right outer wing. On the left side of the two inner courtyards lie the *Exaeron*, the *Triclinium of the Nineteen Seats* and the *Magnaura*. The *Magnaura* was the main audience hall of this palace, again designed as a hall with two consecutive domed bays and lateral galleries, similar to the *Hofkirche* of All Saints in Munich. The arrangement of all these rooms within the *Basilica* had little to do with the actual topography of the Great Palace of Constantinople, which was known at that time only from literary sources such as the *Book of Ceremonies*.[31] In fact, most of the palace buildings in Constantinople were, it seems, independent constructions, and were joined together only loosely by galleries and passages.[32] The only resemblance of the Linderhof project

[28] Bavarian Secret House Archive, inheritance of Ludwig II, 55/6/65; see Baumgartner, *Königliche Träume*, 238 note 3.

[29] The subsequent drafts are shown in Baumgartner, *Königliche Träume*, 230–34. The following summary refers to the last of them.

[30] Rather than the correct word *Excubitores*.

[31] The first archaeological investigations in this area were carried out only during the First World War by a German expedition; see E. Mamboury, T. Wiegand, *Die Kaiserpaläste von Konstantinopel zwischen Hippodrom und Marmara-Meer* (Berlin, 1934).

[32] See, for example J. Bardill, 'Visualizing the Great Palace of the Byzantine emperors at Constantinople', in F. A. Bauer, ed., *Visualisierungen von Herrschaft. Frühmittelalterliche Residenzen – Gestalt und Zeremoniell*. Byzas, 5 (Istanbul, 2006), 5–45; J. Kostenec, 'The Heart of the Empire: The Great Palace of the Byzantine Emperors Reconsidered', in K. R. Dark, ed., *Secular Buildings and the Archaeology of Everyday Life in the Byzantine Empire* (Oxford, 2004), 4–36.

to the actual palace in Constantinople is that the access to its inner parts was through a space called 'sigma' and an octagon; but the architect was apparently unaware of the fact that the 'sigma' of the Constantinopolitan palace was not a closed room, but a semicircular courtyard, and therefore it was also called because of its shape the *Onopodion* or *Onopous* – that is, the 'donkey's foot'.

Behind the *Basilica* lies a large courtyard with a fountain in the middle. Its transverse axis is stressed on the east side by a church shaped like a reduced and simplified copy of Hagia Sophia, and on the east side by a *Hippodromion* along with two *Manganen* on both sides of the entrance, the *Kathisma* above it, a *Spina* on its longitudinal axis and a *Sphendone* at its end. The two quarter-circular buildings, which include a large courtyard on the south side, are called *Kaballas* and *Thermastra*.

A detailed estimate of costs was prepared for this magnificent project by the court architect Georg von Dollmann; this remains extant. The total cost was to be 4,300,000 guilders. This high estimate of construction costs may have been what tipped the balance in favour of the French-inspired project for Linderhof, which had an estimated cost of only 3,000,000 guilders.[33]

The designs of the individual buildings prove that the architect was quite familiar with middle Byzantine architecture in southern Greece, especially in Athens.[34] However, we should stress that the entire plan with its spaciousness and symmetry is modelled rather on French baroque castles, while its inclusion of a landscaped park with free-form paths recalls the English garden design of the later eighteenth century. A very close parallel to this ensemble of a main building, a wide courtyard with fountains and surrounded by arcades, all embedded in a park with irregular paths, can be found in the Wilhelma in Stuttgart, the Moorish-style summer palace of King Wilhelm of Württemberg, which was built between 1842 and 1846.[35] In fact, the fountain of Linderhof was planned in the Arabian style, following the model of the Alhambra in Granada, and Arabian-style elements also occasionally appear elsewhere in this project.[36]

With the exception of the church, the entire design for Linderhof is actually an expression of a then-modern, historicising concept, and only rather

[33] Baumgartner, *Königliche Träume*, 231–6.

[34] The domes of the *Basilica* with their characteristic double windows, for example, are clearly modelled on the domes of the Church of Saint Theodore in Athens.

[35] E. von Schulz, *Die Wilhelma in Stuttgart. Ein Beispiel orientalisierender Architektur im 19. Jahrhundert und ihr Architekt Karl Ludwig Zanth* (Tübingen, 1976).

[36] See Kreisel, *Castles*, 46.

superficially masked with Byzantine exterior decoration. In the surrounding Bavarian Alpine foothills the whole ensemble would probably have looked rather odd. In fact, the design was eventually abandoned and replaced by a project in the rococo style, which was then finally executed.[37]

All subsequent building proposals in the Byzantine style, commissioned by Ludwig II, drew on the unrealised Linderhof design in two respects: throne rooms were to be longitudinal halls with two consecutive domed bays, modelled on the *Hofkirche* of All Saints; and churches were to be imitations of Hagia Sophia.

Over the next 15 years, Ludwig II was mainly occupied with the Castle of Herrenchiemsee, a building in the style of the French baroque,[38] and with the Castle of Neuschwanstein.[39] Neuschwanstein was built in an imaginary style of the western European Middle Ages and is based, among others, on the model of the French castle Pierrefonds, which had been reconstructed by Eugène Viollet-le-Duc for Napoleon III. Ludwig had visited Pierrefonds in July 1868, and a description of the castle written by Viollet-le-Duc himself was in his private library.[40]

In Neuschwanstein, the throne room was the only component constructed in the Byzantine style.[41] It was still based on the designs originally drawn up for Linderhof, though shortened to one bay with an oblong dome – obviously for lack of space, although an anecdote is told that the king struck out the second dome himself on the plan, 'saying that the room was for one king and should therefore have only one dome'.[42] The throne room is the only major work actually built at Ludwig's insistence in the Byzantine style that stands to this day.[43] Ludwig himself expressly ordered that the *Hofkirche* of All Saints should serve as a model for the architecture, while all marbles mentioned in Salzenberg's description of Hagia Sophia were to be used in the interior.[44] At the same time, Ludwig's enthusiasm for Richard Wagner and his works,

[37] Baumgartner, *Königliche Träume*, 173–98.

[38] Baumgartner, *Königliche Träume*, 131–72.

[39] Baumgartner, *Königliche Träume*, 77–108; Kreisel, *Castles*, 60–75.

[40] Cf. Evers, *Ludwig II.*, 128, 160 with notes 724, 182, 195.

[41] Baumgartner, *Königliche Träume*, 95–7; Kreisel, *Castles*, 72–5; M. Spangenberg, *Der Thronsaal von Schloß Neuschwanstein. König Ludwig II. und sein Verständnis vom Gottesgnadentum*, Große Kunstführer, 206 (Regensburg, 1999).

[42] Spangenberg, *Der Thronsaal*, 74.

[43] Baumgartner, *Königliche Träume*, 95–7 and 237; Evers, *Ludwig II.*, 208–9.

[44] In a letter to the Court Secretary von Düfflipp from 30 July 1876, quoted by M. Petzet, W. Neumeister, *Die Welt des bayerischen Märchenkönigs* (Munich, 1980), 89–90. On Salzenberg, see note 20 above.

especially for his stage consecration play *Parzifal*, made it a symbolic Hall of the Holy Grail.[45]

It is important to note in this context that only the architecture and the style of the wall paintings on gold backgrounds imitate Byzantine models – the iconography of these paintings is almost completely of Western inspiration, and was mostly thought up by the king himself: in the apse of the throne room, for example, six canonised medieval kings of western European countries are depicted, including the German emperor Heinrich II (1014–1024) and the French king Louis IX (1226–1270), who was Ludwig's own personal patron saint.[46]

For this throne room, a number of plans and sketches have survived, which were, it seems, rather intended to inspire the king's imagination and not to be actually built. One of these drafts, for a Hall of the Holy Grail, drawn in 1877 by Eduard Ille, is clearly based on the view from the western gallery of Hagia Sophia published by the Fossati brothers.[47] It is significant that such a shape was regarded as a suitable framework for this epitome of Christian mysticism,[48] for the legend of the Holy Grail is actually a purely Western motif without any connection to the Byzantine East.

This reception of Byzantium, as the symbol of imperial representation on the one hand and of Christian mysticism on the other, is probably characteristic for Ludwig II and his whole age. But at this time, a third way, a much more problematic way of receiving Byzantium, began to develop.

In 1884, two years before Ludwig's death, Victorien Sardou's drama *Theodora* was released in Paris with Sarah Bernhardt in the title role, becoming one of the most successful theatrical plays in France and Germany over the following years.[49] Sardou's *Theodora* is a lurid piece of sex and crime with very limited respect to the ancient sources, which shows Byzantium as a decadent state, ruled by a morally depraved, despotic imperial court. At the same time it is – unfortunately, one should say – the ancestor of almost all films and musicals with a Byzantine topic, from the first film in 1909 by Ernesto Maria

[45] Evers, *Ludwig II.*, 203–11; Petzet, Neumeister, *Die Welt des bayerischen Märchenkönigs*, 88–9.

[46] The other kings are Stephen of Hungary, Ferdinand of Spain and Edward of England, as well as Prince Casimir of Poland; see Kreisel, *Castles*, 74. Ludwig I, the king's grandfather, had Louis XVI as his godfather, a descendant of Louis IX and the Capet family.

[47] See Hoffmann, *Hagia Sophia*, catalogue no. 65.

[48] Baumgartner, *Königliche Träume*, 95; Evers, *Ludwig II.*, 208–9.

[49] See O. Delouis, 'Byzance sur la scène littéraire française', in Auzépy, ed., *Byzance*, 112–40.

Pasquali down to Charles Busch's musical called *Theodora, She-Bitch of Byzantium*, which was first staged in New York in 1984.

King Ludwig II had attended Sardou's play already in May 1885 in a private performance at the Munich court theatre,[50] and rewarded the author with the Commander's Cross of the Order of Saint Michael.[51] A design for the stage of the opening scene by Angelo Quaglio II, which was, however, not used in the performance again, imitated the design of the *Hofkirche* of All Saints and the throne room of Neuschwanstein[52] – of which the latter was, as mentioned before, also seen a symbolic temple of the Holy Grail in Ludwig's personal ideology.

This contradictory picture of Byzantium and its culture greatly fascinated King Ludwig. In 1885, he turned his interest to a new project in the Byzantine style, a castle in the vicinity of Linderhof.[53] The notes the architect Julius Hoffman gives us in his draft provide an impression of the view of Byzantium Ludwig II preferred over that propagated by Sardou's Theodora and similar works of literature:

> Meeting the needs and customs of the 5th–6th century, such constructions were built not only for the glory, but also for the defence, similar to a fortress. Solid large towers were deemed as necessary for a retreat when in danger, when the splendid rooms could not longer be defended. Also the gardens, being common in enclosed courtyards, were the chief ornament rather on the inside than to the outside. – In that sense, this complex also was designed: a mighty tower, which dominates the whole thing, and a courtyard with gardens, enclosed by apartments for living and splendour, and the church; in the lower floor, a colonnaded gallery, going all around and uniting all the parts of the building. Only one small deviation may be allowed by applying for an own entrance from the outside for the servants, so that they do not come in contact with the Highest Sovereign.[54]

A detailed description of the complex follows, which in turn includes a large throne hall with two domes and a church in the form of Hagia Sophia, but grouped around a courtyard together with the other rooms in a castle-like

[50] On the performance in Munich, see Evers, *Ludwig II.*, 119, 232–3.

[51] Petzet, Neumeister, *Welt*, 90.

[52] Baumgartner, *Königliche Träume*, 242; Petzet, Neumeister, *Welt*, 90 Figure 120.

[53] Baumgartner, *Königliche Träume*, 239–42. For the planned location of the castle, see Kreisel, *Castles*, 45.

[54] Quoted from Baumgartner, Königliche Träume, 240.

closed arrangement. The castle is raised from the surrounding area on a platform, and is accessible only through a single access point through a large round tower, and the aforementioned entrance for the servants. The imitated Byzantine forms are mixed here with the usual ingredients of Romantic-era castle architecture of the nineteenth century, such as the round tower attached to the stairwells with its overhanging battlements.

While the Byzantine style in the early Linderhof project was intended, by recourse to the imperial palace in Constantinople, to consciously evoke imperial representation and the divine right of kings, Ludwig was depicted here as a Christian ruler, attacked by enemies, but spiritually unconquered. It is not the Christian claim to political universality that is given prominence here in the reception of Byzantium, but escapism and mystical religiosity. The eccentricity and mental instability of the king, which had already progressed to an advanced stage and would lead to his downfall and death in the following year, is clearly reflected here in the proposed architecture.

This project was, however, soon given up in favour of another, on which Ludwig's architects had already begun to work in 1884. This was the development of the ruin of a medieval castle at Falkenstein, which was similar to the nearby Neuschwanstein.[55] Falkenstein is located high in the mountains at an altitude of 1,200 metres above sea level. Georg von Dollmann's first draft proposed a comparatively simple rectangular building with a festival hall and a few private rooms,[56] but already shortly thereafter Christian Jank, one of Ludwig's stage designers, produced a fantastic *veduta*, which showed the castle built in an exaggerated and flamboyant style.[57] The final project returned to more restrained architectural forms, but here too it can be observed, as in earlier projects, that the plans were constantly evolving into a more complex and elaborated construction.[58]

The exterior of the castle and most of its staterooms were to have Romanesque and Gothic forms. Only the king's luxurious bedroom should have been designed in the Byzantine style, and, as ordered by Ludwig, again modelled after the *Hofkirche* of All Saints in Munich. For this project, several plans have survived that were made by Julius Hoffmann, who had replaced Dollmann in the autumn of 1884 as the senior construction director of the

[55] Kreisel, *Castles*, 75–9; Baumgartner, *Königliche Träume*, 115–30; A. and M. Schröppel, M. Einsiedler, *Des Märchenkönigs letzter Traum. Falkenstein* (Pfronten, 1986), 23–67.

[56] Schröppel, Einsiedler, *Des Märchenkönigs letzter Traum*, 26–9.

[57] Schröppel, Einsiedler, *Des Märchenkönigs letzter Traum*, 27.

[58] Schröppel, Einsiedler, *Des Märchenkönigs letzter Traum*, 30–35.

court – the reason for this being, among other things, Dollmann's differences with Ludwig regarding the development of Falkenstein and the interior as designed by Max Schultze.

The Byzantine bedroom was initially planned with a shallow, blind dome over the crossing, which was then to be replaced at the king's request by a higher drum.[59] To avoid the protrusion into the rooms of the upper floor of this dome, which was possibly also inspired by the already-mentioned stage setting for Sardou's *Theodora*, subsequently a low mezzanine floor had to be inserted in the whole building, which would also have been visible on the exterior. For the bedroom, extremely luxurious fittings were planned: the floor was to be decorated by a mosaic, which was apparently inspired by the description of a chamber at the *Kainourgion* palace in Constantinople from the time of Basileios I.[60] The bedroom was to contain a winged altar in the Byzantine style to the left, and a Byzantine washstand to the right – both objects had never existed in Byzantium in this form, but were designed here after the model of liturgical objects from Ravenna and Venice.[61]

The bed itself was intended to stand in the apse, almost in place of an altar.[62] The royal bed of state, which Ludwig used to call *lit* in French, had played a central role in older projects already, and its ideological and artistic shape had separated it from their historical models more than any other component of Ludwig's castles. In Falkenstein, it had assumed the form of a sarcophagus under a ciborium: in the king's ideological concept it had become, as also the subjects of the proposed wall paintings and mosaics suggest, the link between worldly and eternal life – an eternal life that Ludwig reached before completing his plans, and rather earlier than he himself could or would have expected.[63]

If we compare the successive Byzantine projects of Ludwig II of Bavaria, it can be clearly seen that his gradual retreat into a political and religious fantasy world is also reflected here: from an imitation of the entire Great Palace of Constantinople, the way leads to a fortified refuge and on to a single pseudo-sacral space. Or if we put it another way: the way to Byzantium was, for Ludwig II, a metaphor for the way into his very own soul.

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59 Schröppel, Einsiedler, *Des Märchenkönigs letzter Traum*, 43–9 and 58.

60 Schröppel, Einsiedler, *Des Märchenkönigs letzter Traum*, 50 and 59; Evers, *Ludwig II.*, 232. For the description of the Byzantine floor, see: *Theophanes continuatus*, ed. I. Bekker (Bonn, 1838), 333.1–10.

61 Schröppel, Einsiedler, *Des Märchenkönigs letzter Traum*, 57; Evers, *Ludwig II.*, 229.

62 Schröppel, Einsiedler, *Des Märchenkönigs letzter Traum*, 43, 44, 47, 49 and 51.

63 Evers, *Ludwig II.*, 228–35.

When Ludwig II died in June 1886, plans had been prepared not only for Falkenstein castle, but also for a Chinese palace,[64] and the construction of a French baroque pavilion had already begun.[65] In this eclectic cosmos, Byzantium stood for the mystical, inner component of Christianity. Ludwig and his artistic counsellors did not have any deep understanding of Orthodox Christianity: Byzantium was for the king, after all, just one of several possible historical masquerades.

[64] Baumgartner, *Königliche Träume*, 223–8.
[65] Baumgartner, *Königliche Träume*, 214–17.

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Chapter 7

Memory, Mosaics and the Monarch: The Neo-Byzantine Mosaics in the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche

Tonje H. Sørensen[1]

Figure 7.1 The Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche, between 1890 and 1900
Source: Photochrome. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA. LC-DIG-ppmsca-00341.

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This never happened to Theodore Metochites. Upon its construction in 1895, the Neo-Romanesque Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche became involved in the debate about the location of Berlin's new tram system. More specifically the question was where the tram line should be located so that it did not obstruct the view to the monumental, historicist building. The church's main patron, Emperor Wilhelm II, was adamant that the tram would not impede the sightlines to the freestanding church on the equally newly created Auguste-Viktoria-Platz. The suggestion to let the tram travel over a Neo-Romanesque aqueduct was therefore rejected, and instead the firm building the tram lines, Siemens & Halske, suggested constructing a subway.[2] The result was that Berlin got its first U-Bahn, and the sightline to the church commemorating Emperor Wilhelm I and the proposed glory of the Prussian royal family was left untouched.

To a large degree this anecdote from the annals of Berlin's infrastructure is emblematic of the historical anachronisms that make up the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche. It was a historicist building that desired to appear old, but was most definitely a part of the fast-growing, increasingly modern metropolis of Berlin. From 1901–1906 its interior was decorated with an elaborate Neo-Byzantine mosaic, partially inspired by the depictions of Justinian and Theodora in San Vitale in Ravenna. However, the construction of this mosaic was only possible because of a newly created firm that manufactured mosaics, and the interior decoration in turn led to something of a mosaic craze in the bustling city. Consistently, then, Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche highlights the peculiarities of a Neo-Byzantine style; and as will be argued here, the interior mosaic is particularly fruitful in reflecting Byzantine reception in late-Wilhelmine Germany.

In this regard Maurice Halbwachs's argument about the creation of 'topographies of memory' is central. Halbwachs saw that strict historical factuality was not essential when establishing a site of commemoration. In fact, it would seem that the mixture of fact and fiction that went into presenting such a place was almost of greater importance than any question of factuality. In the case of sites of memory, it was more vital that the place was vivid, than true.[3] The Neo-Byzantine mosaic of Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche will therefore also be analyzed as part of a desire to create a collective memory, with the understanding that the Byzantine style was invoked for a specific rhetorical purpose. However, before attempting a reflection upon the mosaic,

[2] V. Frowein-Ziroff, *Die Kaiser Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche* (Berlin, 1982), 179–80.

[3] M. Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory* (Chicago, IL, 1992), 212.

it is necessary to delineate the church itself, its construction, its architect and its goal.

The Church on the Road to Charlottenburg

The main instigator behind the construction of Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche was the young emperor Wilhelm II, who sought to honour his grandfather Wilhelm I. He was supported by *Oberhofmeister* (Lord Chamberlain) Ernst von Mirbach, and, after he was selected by competition, the architect Franz Schwechten.[4] As the name implies, the church was intended primarily to be a monument to the late emperor Wilhelm I, yet it was also a representation of the same Wilhelm I as a defender of 'Christian thought and action among the German people'.[5] As such, the church was part of the wave of memorials to Wilhelm I, roughly some 400 monuments built in the same period, alongside almost 700 memorials to Chancellor Bismarck.[6] However, the specific Christian symbolism – particularly in the interior mosaic – must also be seen as part of the young Wilhelm II's conviction of his divine right to rule, and his growing insistence on a more active role in the government, the latter being quite the opposite of Wilhelm I's more modest preferences.[7]

The ideology of Wilhelm II was reflected in the church, as he features prominently in its interior decoration. The location of the church on a square that carried the name of his wife Augusta-Victoria of Schleswig-Holstein in one of the newer parts of Berlin, stretching out to the suburb of Charlottenburg, again stressed his pre-eminence. This orientation to Charlottenburg is important because this suburb was both the location of the Charlottenburg Palace (a residential and recreational palace for the Hohenzollern family) and the site of Wilhelm I's mausoleum. The Augusta-Victoria Platz was located on the Kurfürstendamm, one of the main streets leading out of Berlin. The church was located and constructed to be seen; its location, name and decoration would serve to manifest the Hohenzollern family.

That the church was to be built in a historicist style was not surprising. The young emperor was well known for his conservative view on art, preferring the

[4] Frowein-Ziroff, *Die Kaiser Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche*, 12.

[5] Frowein-Ziroff, *Die Kaiser Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche*, 33.

[6] M. Jefferies, *Imperial Culture in Germany, 1871–1918* (Chippenham and Eastbourne, 2003), 235.

[7] K. Lerman, 'Wilhelmine Germany', in M. Fulbrook, ed., *German History since 1800* (London, 1997), 208.

traditional and historical styles to the naturalist and realistic tendencies then current. He also saw art as a medium that conveyed a historical and allegorical plan of the divine order of the world regarding the emperor and the *Reich*, Christianity and the national state.[8] The aesthetic choice was therefore not simply a matter of taste, but to the emperor the selection and presentation of an entire world view. Ernst von Mirbach, who had worked closely with the emperor since Wilhelm II was a prince, undoubtedly added his influence to this artistic choice. Von Mirbach was involved in most levels of the construction, and combined a vivid interest in art with a professed fondness for the French historicist architect Viollet-le-Duc and the latter's work with the Abbey Church of Saint-Denis in Paris.[9]

The third person of importance, after Emperor Wilhelm II and Lord Chamberlain von Mirbach, was the architect Franz Heinrich Schwechten, who came from Cologne and had received drawing lessons from the sculptor working on the completion of Cologne cathedral (of medieval origins, but unfinished). Under the Prussian king, Friedrich Wilhelm IV, a massive project to complete the cathedral was instigated, and historian Thomas Nipperdey has famously noted that Cologne Cathedral, through this, became a national monument.[10] Schwechten left Cologne to study in Berlin, and would later take several study trips abroad, particularly to Italy. After he was employed as the architect for the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche, it is recorded that he undertook further trips abroad, specifically to Ravenna, Rome and Palermo.[11] As this brief outline shows, all the principal people involved in the construction of the church exhibited close ties to, and a distinct preference for, historicist architecture, and all three were to a larger or lesser degree involved with the proliferation of a pro-Prussian imperialist commemoration.

As for the church itself, it was one of three commemorative churches decreed by Wilhelm II, and had been preceded by the Gnadenkirche (1890), which was also known as the Kaiserin-Augusta-Gedächtniskirche after Emperor Wilhelm I's late wife Augusta of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach (Emperor Wilhelm II's paternal grandmother).[12] The Gnadenkirche was Romanesque

[8] Frowein-Ziroff, *Die Kaiser Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche*, 38.

[9] Frowein-Ziroff, *Die Kaiser Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche*, 42.

[10] T. Nipperday, 'Der Kölner Dom als Nationaldenkmal', *Historische Zeitschrift* 233 (1981), 595–613.

[11] V. Frowein-Ziroff, *Die Kaiser Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche*, 50.

[12] The third church was the noticeably smaller church dedicated to Wilhelm II's father, Emperor Friedrich III. It was called Kaiser-Friedrich-Gedächtniskirche, built in a

in design. Franz Schwechten had entered the competition for its design, but lost to architect Max Spitta. In her seminal work on the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche, Frowein-Ziroff argues that the Gnadenkirche design could be seen as a portent for the church to Emperor Wilhelm I, as Schwechten's design for the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche was largely modified from his (albeit rejected) design for the Gnadenkirche.[13] Schwechten's design for Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche was also modeled on the Marienkirche in Gelnhausen, a medieval imperial building noted for its particular connection to Emperor Friedrich Barbarossa Hohenstaufen.[14]

The foundation stone for the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche was laid on 22 March 1891, which was also Emperor Wilhelm I's birthday. The church was consecrated on 1 September 1895, which was the eve of the annual 'Sedan Day' commemorating the Prussian victory over the French in 1871. As the victory of 1871 was largely seen as a pivotal event for the formation of the Second German Empire and the elevation of Wilhelm I to the imperial throne of the revived German Empire, the celebration of Sedan Day was associated with a certain national sentiment and imperial grandeur. The church was basilica-shaped, with five towers of which the highest one, located at the west façade, measured 113 meters. It was estimated that the church could hold a congregation of around 2,000 people.[15] With its location at the intersection of the three main roads that ended at the Augusta-Victoria-Platz, and its sheer impressive size, the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche was monumental in proportions as well as in intent.

The Legacy of Theoderic

The first mention of the possibility of an interior mosaic was made by K. E. O. Fritsch while viewing Schwechten's sketches for the proposed

Neo-Gothic style designed by Johannes Vollmer and located in the Tiergarten district in Berlin-Mitte. The church was destroyed during the Second World War, though the name survives for a twentieth-century church built on the same site.

[13] Frowein-Ziroff, *Die Kaiser Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche*, 116.

[14] Frederick I Barbarossa, Holy Roman Emperor, was seen as the precursor of Emperor Wilhelm I, first emperor of the reborn second empire. The comparison was made that the red-bearded 'Barbarossa' was now followed by the white-bearded Wilhelm I, 'Barbablanca'. This comparison was promoted by monuments such as the Kyffhäuser Denkmal and the pictorial programme in the Goslar Kaiserpfalz, in addition to various songs, poems and plays.

[15] E. Gerlach, *Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtnis-Kirche, Berlin* (5th English edn), translated by K. Vanovitch (Regensburg, 2007), 18.

Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche entered into the architectural competition. Commenting on the ceiling height in the proposed rooms, and particularly on the lighting in the stairwell, Fritsch noted the suitability of a mosaic decoration.[16] The use of mosaics as the primary interior decoration would also tie into what was seen as the church's larger historic themes. In this context the conceptualization of Theoderic and Byzantium given by Von Mirbach is of particular interest. In 1897 he published *Die Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche*, and there the discourse of style was presented in the following manner:

> Die Kirche ist im spätgermanischen, dem sogenannten Übergangsstil entworfen. "Germanisch" und nicht dem falschen Worte "Romanisch" sollte man den Stil bezeichnen, welcher sich bei germanischen Volkstämmen eigenartig und großartig herausbildete und in deutschen Gauen seine lieblichste und vollendetest Blüte erreichte. Sein Ursprung reicht in die aus der antiken hervorgegangene altchristliche und byzantinische Baukunst, der charakteristisches Merkmal die stete Wechselwirkung zwischen Italien und Byzants ist, und deren herrliche Werke wir nicht nur in den Bauten christlich-römischer Kaiser, sondern als Deutsche vor Allem auch in den Bauten der kunstsinnigen großen Ostgoten-Königs Theoderich in Ravenna bewundern. Von hier nahm Karl der Große die Muster für Deutschland, vor Allem für den Dom in Aachen; von hier schmückte er seine große Kaiserburg bei Ingelheim am Rhein mit den Kunstschätzen, den Mosaiken, den herrlichen Säulengängen des Palastes Theoderichs. Aus diesen byzantinischen und ostgotischen Vorbildern entwickelte sich im 10. Jahrhundert bei den germanischen Stämmen, vorzugsweise in der Lombardei, in Deutschland und in der Normandie mit eigentümlicher deutscher Kraft und mit urdeutscher, oft noch bis ins Heidentum zurückreichender Anschauung, aber im Geiste der neu anbrechenden Zeit, der unübertroffen dastehende, erhabene, eigenartige germanische Baustil.[17]
>
> [The church is designed in the late Germanic, the so-called transitional style. The style should be called "Germanic", and not "Romanesque" as that would be a false way of describing a style that achieved its unique and most famous form among the German tribes, and attained its full bloom in German lands.

[16] Frowein-Ziroff, *Die Kaiser Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche*, 117.

[17] E. von Mirbach, *Die Kaiser Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche* (Berlin, 1893), 163; quoted in Frowein-Ziroff, *Die Kaiser Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche*, 45. The translation is mine.

> Its origin can be traced back to the early Christian and Byzantine architecture that emerged out of the world of Antiquity, and which was characterized by a persistent interaction between Italian and Byzantine elements. As Germans, we might admire its glorious heritage not only in the monuments left by Roman and Christian emperors, but also in those of the cultured Ostrogoth King Theoderic in Ravenna. Those were the sources of inspiration from which Charlemagne drew when he built his great cathedral in Aachen and embellished his imperial castle at Ingelheim am Rhein with the treasures, mosaics and splendid arcades from the palace of Theodoric. From such Byzantine and Ostrogoth models did an unexcelled, superior and absolutely unique German architectural style develop in the course of the tenth century: primarily in Lombardy, Normandy and the German lands, displaying a curious fortitude that was wholly and originally German – sometimes rooted in the Pagan outlook of ancient days, but always in the spirit of a new, dawning era.]

As Vera Frowein-Ziroff has argued, this implies that Von Mirbach supported the idea that the Romanesque style was of Germanic origin, and also that he sought to connect the new Second German Empire with the reign of Theoderic the Ostrogoth in Ravenna.[18] The inclusion of Theoderic in this church was by no means an innovation, for references to Theoderic had been made in other monumental constructions. Perhaps the best-known example was the gigantic statue of Hermann in Teutoburgerwald, where the Arminius mentioned by Tacitus was depicted with a raised sword and standing on a pillar modeled after Theoderic's mausoleum in Ravenna.[19] Von Mirbach's text can therefore be read as seeking both to establish the idea of an art historical continuum and to provide historical legitimacy for the Wilhemine regime by imbuing it with specific spiritual ancestors.

The invocation of Theoderic and Ravenna is also of particular concern, as the most overtly ideological part of the mosaic, the depiction of the glory of the royal Hohenzollern house, was, as mentioned, partially modeled on the depictions of Justinian and Theodora. The Hohenzollern mosaic is located in the narthex, and as such would be the first impression a visitor

[18] Frowein-Ziroff, *Die Kaiser Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche*, 46.

[19] The Hermann *Denkmal* was erected between 1838 and 1875, based on a design by Ernst von Badel. See H. Scharf, *Kleine Kunstgeschichte des Deutschen Denkmals* (Darmstadt, 1984), 174–5. Also, H. Münkler, *Die Deutschen und ihre Mythen* (Berlin, 2009), 170–80. Münkler also shows how Hermann was additionally compared both to Martin Luther and Siegfried from the Nibelungen saga.

would receive upon entering the church. The nave of the church was also decorated with mosaics, with a pictorial programme that included not only Christ and the apostles, but also embraced such diverse figures as Elijah, Moses, Ulrich Zwingli, John Calvin and Martin Luther,[20] signifying that all the historical implications and *ur*-church references were to be understood through a Protestant framework. However, as large parts of the church – and particularly the decorations in the nave – were destroyed by Allied bombings during the Second World War, the following analysis focuses on the surviving Hohenzollern mosaics in the narthex.

Throughout this analysis it must be kept in mind that the Hohenzollern procession was always intended to be the starting point of an experience that could be called, to use Allison Griffith's term, an immersive vision.[21] Upon entering the completed and fully decorated church in 1906, the visitor would view the historicist exterior and, perhaps through Von Mirbach's writing and description, contemplate the proposed Germanic legacy of Theoderic. Reaching the narthex, the same visitor could be immersed in the pictorial glory of the Hohenzollern dynasty, before finally entering the nave where Zwingli and Elijah faced each other and the ceiling in the choir depicted Augustine, Ambrose, John Chrysostomos and Athanasios.[22] Finishing the impression was a statue of Christ, which strongly resembled the sculpture made popular by the classicist sculpture Bertel Thorvaldsen and whose original is located in Vor Frue Kirke in Copenhagen.

The mosaic programme in the narthex (Figure 7.2) was then an integral part of a pictorial composition that spanned not only the church's interior decoration, but also included the church exterior as well as its geographical location. However, as Frowein-Ziroff has made clear, it was the mosaic in the narthex that set the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche apart, for here, as she describes it, 'the visitor could see the connection and closeness of Wilhelm I and his house to the church and to God'.[23]

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[20] For a detailed description of this programme see Frowein-Ziroff, *Die Kaiser Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche*, 180–88.

[21] A. Griffiths, *Shivers Down Your Spine: Cinema, Museums, and the Immersive View* (New York, 2008). Griffiths defines immersion as '[the] sensation of entering a space that immediately identifies itself as somehow separate from the world and that eschews conventional modes of spectatorship in favor of a more bodily participation in the experience, including allowing the spectator to move freely around the viewing space (although this is not a requirement)'. Griffiths, Shivers Down Your Spine, 2.

[22] Frowein-Ziroff, *Die Kaiser Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche*, 188.

[23] Frowein-Ziroff, *Die Kaiser Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche*, 192.

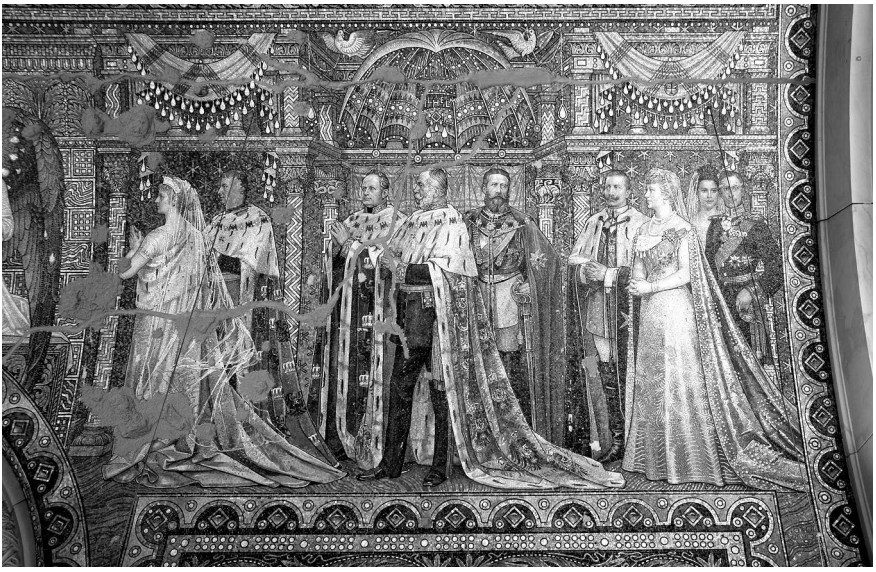

Figure 7.2 The Hohenzollern in the Narthex
Source: Photograph by Armin Kübelbeck, galerie.best4sports.de and galerie.hbz-da.de.

At the center of the barrel vault is a large medallion of Christ *Pantokrator*; on the west wall are two angels shown holding the inscription *Wilhelm I / König v. Preussen / Deutscher Kaiser*, flanked by two heralds in black and gold, with the German eagle on their shields. The decoration on the east wall is organized around the main doorway into the church, and here are depicted various members of the Hohenzollern house. To the left of the main portal are historical persons, and to the right are the recently deceased and living members of the current Hohenzollern family. The procession is led by Queen Louise of Prussia, her husband Friedrich Wilhelm III, followed by Friedrich Wilhelm IV. Emperor Wilhelm I is located in the middle of this composition and is easily identifiable by the *corona vitae* above his head, which incidentally reads *Wilhelm*. To his right stands his son, Emperor Friedrich III, and to *his* right are Wilhelm II and his wife Augusta-Victoria. Finishing the procession are Crown Prince Wilhelm and his wife. All the members of the procession have their hands folded in prayer, except Friedrich III, who instead rests his hand on his sabre and turns slightly away from the procession.[24] The prayer

[24] Friedrich III was emperor for a total of only 99 days, before he died of cancer. Unlike his father Wilhelm I, and his son Wilhelm II, he was known to be a liberal and

procession is clearly turned towards a medallion depiction of the *Agnus Dei*, which is flanked by two angels.

On the north and south walls are mosaics of historical kings and emperors: Charlemagne, Henry I the Fowler, Otto the Great and Rudolf von Habsburg. Finishing the narthex composition are a collection of *bas-reliefs* on the west wall depicting Biblical and historical scenes. The organization of the composition is such that it allows for a typological comparison between the walls. The angels on the east wall, holding the plaque with Wilhelm I's name, are depicted against an architectural structure that visibly resembles Wilhelm I's mausoleum in the nearby Charlottenburg Palace. Opposite the mausoleum can be found the *Agnus Dei*, incidentally seated on a throne, and the doorway below it is also the portal through which there would have been a straight sightline to the altar with its statue of Christ. As such there is a compositional connection between Wilhelm I's mausoleum, the *Agnus Dei* on the throne and the altar.[25] Rainer Schoch has interpreted this to imply that the mausoleum with the indicated 'holy relics of Wilhelm I' is visually connected to the flesh and blood of Christ at the altar.[26] However, as Schoch also points out, below the heralds flanking the two angels are the names of famous men of the Prussian state, among them Bismarck.[27] An additional interpretation is that Emperor Wilhelm I here is associated directly with men well known in a pro-Prussian, pro-Imperial history, and that Wilhelm I is also shown to be the 'altar of the Fatherland'.[28]

The procession on the east wall has convincingly been shown by Frowein-Ziroff to be partially inspired by the mosaics in San Vitale, though the procession of the martyrs in Sant'Apollinare Nuovo is also mentioned by Frowein-Ziroff as a partial inspiration. This is particularly evident when reviewing the working sketches for the mosaics in Berlin: Queen Louise is shown holding a palm branch similar to those of the martyrs in Sant'Apollinare Nuovo, though in the finished mosaic the palm branch has been left out.[29] As mentioned, the procession of the recent, or current,

quite concerned with ruling according to popular opinion. This might be the reason for the diverging composition.

[25] R. Schoch, *Das Herrscherbild in der Malerei des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Munich, 1976), 192.

[26] Schoch, *Das Herrscherbild*, 192.

[27] The other names are, from left to right: Friedrich Karl, Graf von Roon, Bismarck and Moltke; followed by Blücher, Scharnhorst, Hardenberg and Stein.

[28] Schoch, *Das Herrscherbild*, 193.

[29] Frowein-Ziroff, *Die Kaiser Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche*, 250.

Hohenzollern family members is mirrored by a similar procession of historical Hohenzollern personalities on the left, though with the added paradox that this results in a Protestant Evangelical church depicting the Catholic Albrecht von Preussen in the same prayer procession as his Lutheran descendants.[30] A possible interpretation here is that the desired effect is one of a Hohenzollern historical legitimacy through age and regal coherence, rather than a depiction of religious diversity.

While the compositional scheme is clearly indebted to the mosaics of Ravenna, the majority of portraits are inspired and modeled on previous existing paintings and even photographs. As a result the depiction of Otto the Great is based on the image of Otto II or Otto III from the Gospel of Otto III; the mosaic of Charlemagne is modeled after the reliquary bust of Charlemagne in Aachen; and Rudolf von Habsburg is based on the portrait on his grave in Speyer Cathedral.[31] However, in the depictions of the more modern members of the Hohenzollern family, the template was largely either portraits in the Academic genre style or photographs, and both are examples of a visuality that values a mimetic approach to likeness. How, then, does this blend with the Byzantine template, and the Byzantine tradition of imperial portraiture, which, in the words of Thomas Matthews 'neglects individuating features in favour of ranking figures in hierarchy, mirroring the order of the imperial court'?[32]

Byzantium in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction

Before attempting to reflect further on the relationship of the mimetic and the mosaic, it is necessary to outline the specific mode of mosaic production used in the decoration of the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche. While several artists designed the mosaics for the church, the mosaic in the narthex was predominantly the design of Hermann Schaper, though supervised by the emperor, Von Mirbach and Swechten. While Schaper made the design, the mosaic itself was produced by the workshop Puhl & Wagner. Wilhelm II showed a great interest in the art of mosaics, and is reported to have conversed frequently with the craftsmen at the workshop, as well as devoting himself to studies of ancient mosaics.[33] Frowein-Ziroff estimates that the total interior

[30] Frowein-Ziroff, *Die Kaiser Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche*, 262.

[31] Frowein-Ziroff, *Die Kaiser Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche*, 275–6.

[32] T. Matthews, *Byzantium: From Antiquity to the Renaissance* (New Haven, CT, and London, 1998), 27.

[33] Frowein-Ziroff, *Die Kaiser Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche*, 302.

decorated with mosaics in the entire Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche covered 2,740 square meters, which she notes is only surpassed by San Marco in Venice and Cappella Palatina in Palermo.[34]

Though the ancestry invoked by Puhl & Wagner's decoration scheme was ancient, the techniques employed were fairly new. Based on methods developed by Salviatis in Venice in 1860, the mosaics were composed in the workshop on transportable plates. This method ensured that the mosaics could be transported with ease, which is attested by the list of places and churches that received Puhl & Wagner mosaics: the Erlöser- and Himmelfahrtskirhe in Jerusalem, a Roman Catholic church in Chicago, the Protestant church in Montevideo, the Wilhelmina-Kirche in Rotterdam and the Protestant Church in Tokyo, among others. However, this technique also required that the mosaics be assembled on their plates in reverse. The plates could then be transferred to the designated wall, ensuring the re-reversal that let the mosaic face the intended way. In contrast to the traditional method in which tesserae are assembled directly on the wall, ensuring the possibility that the angles of the tesserae could be shifted to ensure a difference in light, the Puhl & Wagner mosaics created an even, smooth surface.[35]

There are indications that the artists who designed the mosaics for the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche strove to implement the diffusion of light afforded by traditional-method mosaics with their uneven surface, and one artist, Max Pfannschmidt, tried to use Santi Cosmas e Damiano in Rome as a template, while Schaper bemoaned that the modern mosaic did not allow the same play with light and vibrancy as the old mosaics. As Frowein-Ziroff rightly argues, the mosaics produced by Puhl & Wagner were examples of a workshop manufacturing mosaics, in a sense 'mass producing' them, and in so doing acting as a third party between the artists and the artwork.[36]

In view of this, we need to return to the time of the church's construction: the hustle and bustle of the fast-growing Berlin with the increasing presence of the photograph. It has been argued that the photograph allowed for the development of Art History as a scholarly field, with – for instance – the use by Heinrich Wölfflin in his lectures consisting of comparative analysis of images.[37] With regard to the Kaiser-Wilhelm-

[34] Frowein-Ziroff, *Die Kaiser Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche*, 303.

[35] Frowein-Ziroff, *Die Kaiser Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche*, 303; see also the catalogue from Puhl & Wagner, *Mosaik im Profanbau* (Neukölln, 1912).

[36] Frowein-Ziroff, *Die Kaiser Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche*, 304.

[37] Wölfflin sought recognition for Art History as an independent discipline, for which he strove by implementing models set by psychology and natural science. See

Gedächtniskirche, the presence of photographs also had a more direct effect. As noted, photographs formed the basis for modern portraits, but photographs had also been vital in the entire conceptualization of the church. Specifically, photographs had been a vital source for Wilhelm II to acquaint himself with historical architecture, and it is shown that in the winter of 1889/90 he enthusiastically studied the Romanesque churches of the Rhineland:

> Er ließ sich eine große Zahl von Photographien der altberühmten Kirchen des Rheinlandes mit den Abbildungen zahlreicher Details, namentlich der mannigfaltigen Ornamente, vorlegen. Seine Lieblingsbauten waren die Pfarrkirche und der Kaiserpalast in Gelnhausen aus der Hohenstaufenzeit, Limburg, Maria Laach, Andernach, Sinzig, der Bonner Münster, Schwarz-Rheindorf, die bekannten romanischen Kirchen Kölns u.a. [...][38]

> At his wish, a large number of photographs from the oldest and most famous churches along the Rhine were presented to him, together with images of innumerable details, especially the various ornaments. His favourite buildings were the parish church and the Imperial Palace in Gelnhausen from the Hohenstaufen period, Limburg, Maria Laach, Andernach, Sinzig (Remagen), the Bonn Minster, Schwarz-Rheindorf, including the famous Romanesque churches in Cologne [...]

While this adds to the argument that Wilhelm II sought to portray through Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche a version of German history tied to the purported glory of the Hohenstaufen dynasty and the Holy Roman Empire, it also underlines the importance of photographs as inspiration and mimetic templates for the building and its decoration. To summarize, the mosaics in Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche can be termed mass-produced works of art, based on portrait photographs and photographic templates. How are we to understand this difference in visuality from, for instance, the visuality of the mosaics in Ravenna?

In his famous essay 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction', Walter Benjamin states, 'In principle, the work of art has always been reproducible. What man has made, man has always been able to

D. Karlhom, *Handbökernas Konsthistoria. Om skapandet av 'allmän konsthistorie' i Tyskland under 1800-talet* (Stockholm and Stehag, 1996), 50–53 and 245.

[38] Seidel, *Der Kaiser und die Kunst* (Berlin, 1907), 78. The translation is mine.

make again'.[39] However, a vital point for Benjamin was that the coming of photographs ensured a change in the means of technological reproduction, or as he says:

> With photography, in the process of pictorial reproduction the hand was for the first time relieved of the principle artistic responsibilities, which henceforth lay with the eye alone as it peered into the lens. Since the eye perceives faster than the hand can draw, the pictorial reproduction was so enormously speeded up that it was able to keep pace with speech.[40]

There are other changes involved as well: photography and film can enlarge and thus reveal details otherwise difficult to see. Mosaics hidden in the shadow on niches can now be reproduced and, for instance, printed on postcards, and in Benjamin's words, 'it makes it possible for the original to come closer to the person taking it in [...] The cathedral leaves its site to be received in the studio of an art lover.'[41]

What is vital for Benjamin is that this mechanical reproduction changes our perception of the represented art work. If we follow Benjamin, what he calls the genuineness of an object 'is the quintessence of everything about it since its creation that can be handed down, from its material duration to the historical witness it bears'. With the mechanical reproduction of, for instance, a photograph, this materiality is seen by Benjamin to be 'removed from human perception', and subsequently 'the authority of the thing', its sense of tactile history, starts to diminish or, in Benjamin's term, 'to wobble'. This, of course, leads to Benjamin's famous term *aura*, coupled with the argument that this form of reproductive technology 'removes the thing reproduced from the realm of tradition'.[42] One can see Benjamin's point, as there is an evident difference in the use and feel of the mosaics in the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche as opposed to older mosaics, which in turn is plainly tied to its methods of mass production and their photographic templates. However, is there a distinct paradox too? After all, for Benjamin the mechanical work is removed from the realm of tradition, while the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche and its Neo-Byzantine decorations can be argued to be all about the invocation of tradition.

[39] W. Benjamin, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction', in W. Benjamin, *One-way Street and Other Writings* (Harmondsworth, 2009), 229.

[40] Benjamin, 'The Work of Art', 230.

[41] Benjamin, 'The Work of Art', 232.

[42] Benjamin, 'The Work of Art', 233.

The Mimetic and the Mosaic: Creating the Topography of a Holy Land?

The role of photographic templates can be said to be vital for the construction and decoration of the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche. However, the role of the photograph reveals two different approaches to Byzantine and historical architecture. While photographs of the churches and the historical mosaics are, in addition to study trips particularly to Italy, used as models for the Wilhelmine church, this also denotes a visuality that is selective. The mosaic decoration in Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche is not modeled on *one* specific mosaic, but is rather a product of sampling from various well-known sources. The procession of Sant'Apollinare Nuovo is blended with the presentation of Justinian in San Vitale, producing a synthesis of ruler imagery. If one allows a pun, it is a 'mosaic of various mosaics'. As such, the church is not an attempt at a Byzantine reconstruction, but more a Neo-Byzantine paraphrase; here the desire is not to evoke Byzantine history as such, but more the general idea of splendor, perhaps specifically religious and imperial splendour.

This interpretation is furthered by the mosaic portraits of the most recent of the Hohenzollern monarchs, who all strongly resemble their contemporary portraits and photographs. The most obvious explanation is that they are meant to be easily recognizable, and that the visitors entering the church will, with simplicity, identify, for instance, Wilhelm II among the procession. Granted, there is nothing particularly avant-garde about this approach, and similar tactics were employed by, for instance, Augustus and his imperial portraiture. However, I would argue that the mosaics of Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche are not noteworthy due to any form of artistic innovation, but rather to the visual paradox afforded by the mixture of Wilhelmine mimetic portraiture and mass-produced mosaics, and the complex stylistics of traditional mosaics. This is evident in the representation of Emperor Wilhelm I, whose facial features and red striped pants are meticulously fashioned by the tiny tesserae, and which, rather than being compositionally connected to the crown above his head, seem to stand apart from it. It is as if a photographic mimeticism of Wilhelm I and the stylistic depiction of the crown oppose each other more rather than attract.

In comparison another glorification of Wilhelm I can be considered, specifically the one painted by Hermann Wislicenus and located in the Goslar Kaiserpfalz.[43] After the heavy reconstruction of Goslar Palace, the

[43] T. Haugland Sørensen, *Bildeprogrammet i Kaiserpfalz Goslar. Monumentet som redigert virkelighet* (Bergen, 2006), 44–6.

Düsseldorf painter Wislicenus was selected to decorate the main hall with a pictorial programme illustrating the glory of the new German Empire. This was primarily done by presenting it, via the genre of historical paintings, as the restoration of the old German Empire with a specific focus on the Middle Ages and on Emperor Friedrich I 'Barbarossa' Hohenstaufen. In the hall's main painting, Wilhelm I is depicted riding in triumph, while being greeted by men of state such as Bismarck, and saluted with palm branches by women of the imperial family. On a cloud above Wilhelm I, an icon resembling the Virgin Mary is actually Queen Louise holding a crown above her son's head. As such, there are several similarities between the two depictions: heavenly crowns, a triumphal procession, and to some degree also the inclusion of palm branches. It is therefore easy to agree with Rainer Schoch when he claims that these two depictions can be read as glorifications of the empire and the imperial family.[44] However, an interesting difference is that the Goslar painting does not present the same compositional divergences as the mosaics of the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche. Instead, the genre of the Academy historical painting blends well with the mimetic depiction of Wilhelm I and the other dignitaries, due in part to the traditions of Academy depictions of anatomy.

The mosaics in Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche rather contain compositional opposition and paradox, which was probably not intended to be yet still is emblematic of the ahistorical appearance of the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche in the middle of a busy Berlin square. Referring to the ideas of Walter Benjamin, the mosaics can be said to be an example of a tactile history that has started to wobble. The Byzantium here evoked is not specific, is not even definably historical, but instead appears as a timeless amalgamation constructed of tiny pieces of mass-produced tesserae. To some degree this timelessness can be said to work in the mosaics' favour if the church is seen as a monument that is included in a collective memory.

In his seminal works on collective memory, Maurice Halbwachs also analyzed what he referred to as 'The Legendary Topography of the Gospels'. Focusing on the conceptualization of the Holy Land made by pilgrims, Halbwachs argues:

> The most important prerequisite of the places was that they be more or less in harmony with the words, the figures, and the events, all of which could have been imagined just as much as actually observed, but all of which were in any case surrounded by an unreal fringe. This is why the memory of groups, and also

[44] Schoch, *Das Herrscherbild*, 185–95.

> of individuals, sometimes transforms into reality what is but imagination and dream, and looks for and finds a place in some region of space [...][45]

'More or less in harmony,' says Halbwachs. Had the intention of Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche been to recreate a Byzantine church mosaic, one could argue that it failed. However, if the church is read as a monument, it is easier to see the mosaic decoration as 'surrounded by an unreal fringe' or even 'a transformation into reality what is but imagination and a dream'.

As a monument, Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche was part of an extensive commemorative building programme that lasted for the entirety of the Second German Empire, but which was particularly productive under Wilhelm II. The last emperor not only funded the construction of monuments, but often had a direct say in their creation, as was the case with the *Siegesallee* in Berlin. This was a double row of marble statues depicting famous people from German history; where a basis for the various portraits could not be found, friends of the Kaiser contributed their features. The depictions of historical personages truly wore the visages of the contemporary. The *Siegesallee* is of interest here mainly due to the criticism leveled at it by writer Alfred Döblin, who condemned its 'Byzantine emptiness and falseness of spectacle'.[46] None of the statues in the *Siegesallee* could be said to look particularly Byzantine (if such a designation could be used), and so Döblin's criticism is to be understood as a pejorative rather than an aesthetic designation. As such, it is a derogatory use connected to ideas of emptiness and spectacle, and one is tempted to recall Montesquieu's infamous dismissal of Byzantium as a place where 'all virtue consists in an ignorant and stupid passion for icons'.[47] The significant difference is that, while Montesquieu is criticizing Byzantium, Döblin is using the term 'Byzantine' to criticize the German emperor.

'Sailing to Byzantium'

While the mosaics of Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche sought to invoke a sense of history, perhaps even timelessness, the urban development around the

[45] Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 212.

[46] M. Jefferies, 'Imperial Germany: Cultural and Intellectual Trends', in John Breuilly, ed., *Nineteenth-Century Germany: Politics, Culture and Society, 1780–1918* (London, 2001), 236.

[47] Montesquieu, *Considerations on the Causes and the Greatness of the Romans and the Their Decline*, trans. David Lowenthal (Ithaca, NY, 1965), 203.

church could be described as increasingly modern. Several cinemas did brisk business in the area surrounding the church, bringing with it a very different combination of photographic mimeticism and the play of light from what the mosaics of Puhl & Wagner accomplished. In 1930, long after the days of Emperor Wilhelm II, the writer, cultural critic and film-theorist Siegfried Kracauer contemplated in a piece published in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*:

> Von der religiösen Baumasse strahlt ein sanftes Leuchten aus, das so beruhigend wie unerklärlich ist, eine Helle, die mit dem profanen rötlichen Schimmer der Bogenlampen nichts gemein hat, sondern sich fremd von der Umwelt abhebt und ihren Ursprung in der Kaiser Wilhelm-Gedächtniswänden selber zu haben scheint. [...] Der geheimnisvolle Glanz ist in Wirklichkeit ein Reflex. Reflex der Lichtfasade, die vom Ufa-Palast an bis über das Capitol hinaus die Nacht zum Tage machen, um aus dem Arbeitstag ihrer Besucher das Grauen der Nacht zu versuchen [...] der milde Glanz, der die Kaiser Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche umfließt, ist der unbeabsichtigte Widerschein dieser finsteren Glut. Was vom Lichtspektakel abfällt und vom Betrieb ausgestoßen wird – öde Mauern bewahren es auf. Das Äußere der Kirche, die keine Kirche ist, wird zum Hort des Vergossenen und Vergessenen und strahlt so schön, als sei es Allerheiligste selber.[48]
>
> [From the religious building radiates a soft glow that is as soothing as inexplicable, a brightness that has nothing to do with the secular reddish glow of the arc lamps but strangely distinguishes itself from the environment and seems to have its origin in the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Memorial walls themselves [...] The mysterious radiance is in fact a reflection of the illuminated façades around the church, where the cinemas of Ufa and Capitol are turning night into day, to make its visitors forget the dread of the night after a long day's work. The mild radiance embracing the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche is nothing but the unintended inversion of this gloomy glow. The waste walls are preserving the fallouts of the lightshow, the rest products of the businesses around. The exterior of the church, which is no church, becomes a sanctuary for everything that has become discarded and forgotten, shining forth as were it the Holiest of Holy.]

As for the mosaics, Puhl & Wagner made a name for themselves because of the church's decoration, and continued to supply mass-produced mosaics for all manner of constructions. Perhaps one of these locations is a worthy

[48] Frowein-Ziroff, *Die Kaiser Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche*, 336.

place to conclude. In 1921–1923, Puhl & Wagner provided the mosaics used to decorate the Golden Hall in Stockholm's City Hall. This hall, with its interpretation of Swedish history in a Byzantine style, is traditionally used in the celebration of the Nobel Prize, a prize that in 1923 was awarded W. B. Yeats. In 1928, Yeats published *The Tower*, which contained, among other poems, the immortal 'Sailing to Byzantium' with its lines,

> O sages standing in God's holy fire,
> As in the gold mosaic of a wall,
> Come from the holy fire, perne in a gyre,
> And be the singing-masters of my soul.

It is commonly noted that when Yeats wrote this he had been to Ravenna, but not to Constantinople.[49] In the context of this article it is tempting to add: he had also seen the golden mosaics made by Puhl & Wagner.

[49] R. S. Nelson, *Hagia Sophia, 1850–1950: Holy Wisdom Modern Monument* (Chicago, IL, and London, 2004), 129–54.

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Chapter 8

Typecasting Byzantium: Perpetuating the Nineteenth-Century British Pro-Classical Polemic

Helen Rufus-Ward[1]

The casting of plaster models of sculptural art works was undertaken on a massive scale in the nineteenth century. Amongst the objects reproduced in plaster cast were small carved ivories, which in this plaster form were known as fictile ivories.[2] This chapter examines the British nineteenth-century institutional collecting of fictile ivories, and considers the didactic way such plaster casts were used. The main focus will be the popularity of a canonical reading of art history as 'a chain of art', with a reliance on typological classification that resulted in placing art works in a hierarchy of classes.[3] At the heart of this discussion will be three Late Antique and Byzantine fictile ivories from the Victoria and Albert Museum's cast collection. They are copies of the World Museum, Liverpool's fifth-century Asclepius–Hygieia diptych; a panel from the sixth-century Clementinus consular diptych; and the tenth-/eleventh-century St John the Baptist panel (figures 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3).

From the eighteenth century, great importance was placed on the acquisition of good-quality plaster casts of sculpture, particularly reproductions of the classical and Renaissance periods.[4] By the 1850s a programme of mass production of plaster casts was underway, encouraged by the popularity of the cast courts at the London Great Exhibition of 1851. This led to the opening, in 1873, of the South Kensington Museum's Cast Court,

[1] University of Sussex.

[2] The term 'fictile' comes from the Latin adjective *fictilis*, meaning made of earthenware or clay by a potter.

[3] I. Jenkins, *Archaeologists and Aesthetes in the Sculpture Galleries of the British Museum 1800–1939* (London, 1992), 34.

[4] A. Wilson and I. Bignamini, *Grand Tour: The Lure of Italy in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1996).

part of which survives today in the re-named Victoria and Albert Museum. Evidence of the importance placed on the acquisition of good-quality, plaster-cast and electrotype reproductions of works of art is apparent in the setting up in 1867 of a European Commission to obtain and share reproductions of known masterpieces of world art. The intention behind the convention was to share the most prized classical sculptures of the Western canon through a programme of plaster reproductions.[5]

The sketching of antique statuary in two-dimensional form was the foundation of artistic training. Consequently an art institution's collection was not considered complete without a comprehensive series of plaster casts for the advancement of art education and the improvement of taste.[6] In addition, plaster casts were considered worthy substitutes when original sculptures were not available (or for that matter affordable), and they were often placed alongside originals in order to fill gaps in art gallery and museum collections.[7] The curator of the Liverpool Museum, Charles Tindal Gatty, expressed the educational value of plaster casts in a paper written in 1877 on Liverpool's Mayer Museum collection:

> It is also a very important matter, to have a series of casts of the finest and most select works of art in the world – the best Greek examples of marble frieze or silver coin – and have them arranged in their historical sequence, so that the developments and peculiarities of each period may be made plain and studied.[8]

By the mid-nineteenth century, plaster casts of antique statues were routinely used to illustrate fine art and art historical lectures, so much so that it became necessary for large plaster casts of classical or Renaissance sculpture to be fitted with wheels to enable them to be moved easily in and out of lecture theatres.[9]

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[5] National Art Library Special Collections: *Convention for promoting universally reproductions of works of art* (London, 1867–1868). Pressmark: 86.CC.36. 1867.

[6] M. Postle, 'Naked Authority? Reproducing Antique Statuary in the English Academy from Lely to Haydon', in A. Hughes and E. Ranfft, eds, *Sculpture and its Reproductions* (London, 1997), 79.

[7] F. Pulszky, 'On the progress and decay of art: and on the arrangement of a national museum', *The Museum of Classical Antiquities: A Quarterly Journal of Architecture and the Sister Branches of Classical Art*, No. V, March 1852, Vol. 1 (of 2), 1851–1853 (London, 1852), 13.

[8] C. T. Gatty, 'A paper read before the members of the Liverpool Arts Club, 3rd November, 1877', *The Mayer Collection in the Liverpool Museum, Considered as an Educational Possession* (Liverpool, 1878), 35.

[9] M. Beard, 'Casts and cast-offs: the origins of the Museum of Classical Archaeology', *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*, 39 (1993), 8–9.

Smaller sculptural art works were also added to the repertoire of reproductions that included carved ivories.

It was in this context that the Arundel Society had been established in 1848 to preserve records of important paintings and sculpture by producing accurate reproductions of art works. It was named after the seventeenth-century connoisseur and collector Thomas Howard, second Earl of Arundel.[10] Initially, the Arundel Society's programme of ivory casting involved British Museum Assistant Keeper of Antiquities Edmund Oldfield and scholar of ivory Alexander Nesbitt making casts of ivories from important European collections. Nesbitt was a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London with a particular interest in ivories and ancient glass and was responsible for the invention of a new method of making moulds, using gutta-percha. The plaster casts produced from the gutta-percha process were 'saturated with stearine, which gave them the appearance of ivory and rendered them less liable to injury'.[11] Stearine is a mixture of fatty acids used in candle-making and the white crystalline constituent of tallow. This new process was not only more accurate, producing sharper casts, but the process was considered less likely to damage the originals.[12] After casting, fictile ivories were then sometimes carved to delineate the detail of the original ivory carving, and hand-coloured to imitate the yellowing of real ivory. The production of electrotype moulds formed from gutta-percha facilitated an almost unlimited supply of facsimile ivories. At first these casts were manufactured by Messrs Franchi, but later this was undertaken by Messrs Elkington.[13]

In 1855, at the Annual General Meeting of the Arundel Society, the architect and art historian Matthew Digby Wyatt (1820–1877) illustrated his lecture on Byzantine, medieval and Gothic ivories with plaster casts. Wyatt's lecture marked the launch of the society's fictile ivory collections, manufactured for sale to public art institutions and private collectors.[14] Wyatt's lecture was entitled 'History, methods and productions of the art of sculpture in ivory'

[10] 'Minutes of a meeting of the Arundel Society, 2nd June 1858', *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 215 (July–August 1863), 45–6.

[11] *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of London*, 2nd Series, Vol. 1 (17th Nov. 1859), 182.

[12] *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of London*, 181.

[13] J. O. Westwood, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Fictile Ivories in the South Kensington Museum* (London, 1876), 'Preface', xi.

[14] M. D. Wyatt and E. Oldfield, *Notices of Sculpture in Ivory: consisting of a lecture on the history, methods, and chief productions of the art, delivered at the first annual general meeting of the Arundel Society, on the 29th June 1855 and a catalogue of specimens of ancient ivory-carvings in various collections* (London, 1856), 1–24.

and it concentrated on the history of ivory carving from the classical era to the Renaissance.[15] The lecture stressed the ability of ivory casts to illustrate the development of sculpture in a more inexpensive and convenient form than large-scale plaster-cast sculpture. In line with the convention of the time, the ivory casts were divided into 'schools and periods of art' that followed a canonical view of art history within a typological classification system valuing some ivories with more classical content over the medieval or Byzantine examples.

Figure 8.1 *The Asclepius–Hygieia consular diptych*, nineteenth century, plaster cast (fictile ivory), each panel 314 × 139 mm

Source: Courtesy Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

[15] Wyatt and Oldfield, *Notices*, advertisement before title page.

Amongst the fictile ivories cast in plaster by the Arundel Society and included in Wyatt and Oldfield's catalogue *Notices of Sculpture in Ivory* were the fifth-century Asclepius–Hygieia diptych, the sixth-century Clementinus consular diptych, and the tenth-/eleventh-century St John the Baptist panel.[16] These fictile ivories were casts taken from three ivories from the collection of the Hungarian aristocratic collector Gabriel Fejérváry de Komlos Keresztes. On his death in 1851, the collection was inherited by his nephew Ferenc Aurelius Pulszky, a political émigré and scholar of art, living in exile in England. By 1855 Pulszky had sold his ivory collection to Liverpool goldsmith and jeweller Joseph Mayer, who gifted it to the Liverpool municipal museum in 1867.[17] The ivories are recorded as being the property of Joseph Mayer in Wyatt and Oldfield's 1856 fictile ivory catalogue.[18]

The fifth-century Asclepius–Hygieia diptych depicts Asclepius, the god of health and medicine, together with the diminutive Telesphorus, the god of convalescence, on the left panel, and Hygieia, the goddess of health, with Cupid at her feet on the right (Figure 8.1). These figures represent the father and daughter god and goddess, in the roles of divine patrons of healing and medicine. In the nineteenth century this diptych was erroneously dated to the second century due to its classical style and mythological subject matter. In line with the nineteenth-century privileging of art works that displayed a classical style, this diptych was not only misdated to an earlier century, but was also given a 'Class I' Classical classification by Wyatt and Oldfield, under the heading 'Roman diptychs of mythological character' in the Arundel Society's fictile ivory catalogue.[19]

An anonymous article from the *Art Journal*, dated 1 October 1855, gives a sense of the esteem in which nineteenth-century scholars held the Asclepius–Hygieia diptych. This article described the diptych in this way:

> It was executed in the reign of Marcus Aurelius or Commodus; on one tablet is Æsculapius and Telesphorus, on the other Hygeia and Cupid; each figure is seven inches high, and carved in the best style of Art: nothing can exceed the

[16] Wyatt and Oldfield, *Notices*, 33 and 42.

[17] F. A. Pulszky, *Catalogue of the Fejérváry Ivories in the Museum of Joseph Mayer* (Liverpool, 1856); M. Gibson, *Liverpool Ivories*: *Late Antique and Medieval Ivory and Bone Carvings in Liverpool Museum and the Walker Art Gallery* (London, 1994); T. Kabedebo, *Diplomat in Exile: Francis Pulszky's Political Activities in England 1849–1860* (New York, 1979).

[18] Wyatt and Oldfield, *Notices*, 31.

[19] Wyatt and Oldfield, *Notices*, 33.

> spirit and delicacy with which they are executed, and the ornamental accessories are equally remarkable for vigour and minute manipulation: it is a triumph of the Arts of ancient Rome.[20]

Nineteenth-century scholars consistently responded to the Asclepius–Hygieia diptych as if it were a piece of classical sculpture, supporting their belief that such diptychs represented copies of long-lost classical statues.[21] Pulszky wrote that, in his opinion, 'the reliefs are copies of some well-known and celebrated [classical] marble statues'.[22] He also remarked on its similarity to statues held in the Vatican and the Louvre in Paris.[23]

What this immediately reveals is that to nineteenth-century scholars one of the main values of rare mythological diptychs was as miniature copies of classical sculpture, the models for which were taken from the large public statues displayed within Roman temples.[24] In the case of the Asclepius–Hygieia diptych, this was supported by the way that the main figures appear to have been carved as if standing statue-like on a plinth (Figure 8.1). In addition, Pulszky argued that Asclepius's club and Hygieia's snake coiled around the tripod 'might have formed the artistical supports' of the original statues from which they were copied.[25] For Pulszky, therefore, an ivory diptych such as the Asclepius–Hygieia was valued as if it was a piece of miniature classical statuary.

Pulszky's enthusiasm for this diptych reveals a nineteenth-century predilection for ivories that displayed classical content placing them in a period of artistic growth along the triadic cyclical lines of growth, decline and regeneration. It could be argued that Pulszky's excitement at this diptych's classical identification was a product of a pro-classical perspective cultivated by an elite education dominated by the perceived high points of classical culture. Undoubtedly, in the nineteenth century a good knowledge of Latin and Greek was seen as the mark of a gentleman.[26] As a result, there was a high status attached to the study of the classics, a situation that continued

[20] 'Antique Ivory Carvings', *Art Journal*, 1 October 1855, 276.

[21] Pulszky, *Catalogue of the Fejérváry Ivories*, nos 25–6, 35–6; R. Delbrueck, *Die Consulardiptychen und verwandte Denkmäler*, Vol. II, no. 55 (Berlin and Leipzig, 1926–1929), 215–18.

[22] Pulszky, *Catalogue of the Fejérváry Ivories*, nos 25–6, 35–6.

[23] Pulszky, *Catalogue of the Fejérváry Ivories*, no. 27.

[24] Delbrueck, *Die Consulardiptychen*, no. 55, 215–18.

[25] Pulszky, *Catalogue of the Fejérváry Ivories*, no. 37.

[26] R. Jenkyns, *The Victorians and Ancient Greece* (Oxford, 1980), 63 and 65.

well into the twentieth century, resulting in a form of epistemological gatekeeping that favoured the study of classical histories and literature over their modern counterparts.

Since education in the classics was a marker 'of social and class distinction', the acquisition policy employed by museums up until the end of the 1850s favoured objects from the classical period.[27] In other words, nineteenth-century scholars of art were predisposed to appreciate any object that possessed a level of classical content. This preference is plainly illustrated by the responses to the classical-looking (but actually fifth-century) Asclepius–Hygieia diptych, which, as a second-century diptych, enjoyed celebrity status, long catalogue entries, and regular display in prestigious exhibitions.[28]

Such a classical bias was echoed in the early collecting policy of the British Museum, which mirrored the taste of its founder Sir Hans Sloane, and was to continue with the acquisition of the classical collections of Sir William Hamilton, Charles Townley and Lord Elgin.[29] A well-known anecdote is illustrative of this nineteenth-century refusal to recognise the value of Byzantine antiquities. This involved the recording of a conversation in 1860 between the principal librarian of the British Museum, Sir Anthony Panizzi (1797–1879), and the Chairman of the Government's Select Committee. When Panizzi was asked whether he had any 'Byzantine, Oriental, Mexican and Peruvian antiquities' stored away in the museum's basement, he replied that he had, but added that he did not 'think it any great loss that they are not better placed than they are'.[30] By dismissing Byzantine objects in this way, Panizzi not only highlighted his own scholarly contempt for Byzantine art but also, as the head of a key national institution, effectively endorsed the perpetuation of the perceived inferiority of Byzantine cultural material.[31] As principal librarian of the British Museum, Panizzi was in a powerful position that allowed him to exert influence on the acquisition policy followed by the museum's trustees.

[27] M. Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy: an Essay in Political and Social Criticism* [originally published 1869], ed. J. Dover Wilson (Cambridge, 1932), 43.

[28] Gibson, *Liverpool Ivories*, 15.

[29] B. Fothergill, *Sir William Hamilton: Envoy Extraordinary* (London, 1969); B. F. Cook, *The Townley Marbles* (London, 1985); W. St. Clair, *Lord Elgin and the Marbles* (London, 1967), 2nd edition (Oxford, 1983).

[30] Parliamentary Papers, House of Commons 1860, *Report from the Select Committee on the British Museum*, xvi, 183, paragraph 18.

[31] C. Entwistle, 'O. M. Dalton: "Ploughing the Byzantine furrow"', *Through the Looking Glass: Byzantine through British Eyes* (Aldershot, 2000), 177.

Figure 8.2 *Clementinus consular diptych* (left panel), nineteenth century, plaster cast (fictile ivory), 370 × 125 mm

Source: Courtesy Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

This negative attitude to Byzantine art works can also be seen from responses to the sixth-century Clementinus consular diptych (Figure 8.2). The panel shows the consul Clementinus presiding over his consular games, seated on an ornamental stool (*sella curulis*) and flanked by two female figures representing the cities of Rome and Constantinople. On the top register, either side of a small cross, are two portrait roundels representing the emperor Anastasius I (491–518) on the right, and the empress Ariadne on the left. In the bottom register, beneath Clementinus's stool, are two *putti* pouring out largesse intended for distribution to the crowd at the consular games.

For nineteenth-century scholars, the Clementinus diptych epitomised the artistic decay of Byzantine style. In Wyatt's view, the superiority of the 'antique element' was dying out by the time the Clementinus diptych was carved, to be 'gradually replaced by those features of conventionality, which we shall subsequently meet with, asserting an independent style of their own'.[32] Wyatt believed that the Clementinus diptych represented an ivory that was far removed from the desirability of the classical period in both workmanship and style. This conviction found expression in Wyatt's description of the analogous Anastasius consular diptych (517 AD) and is a typical nineteenth-century response to sixth-century consular diptychs:

> In the rigidity of the principal figure, that of the consul, and its unmeaning head, may be traced the loss of antique skill in depicting human life, while in the elaborate seat, and rich embroideries of the Consular robes, the footstool and the chair cushion, may already be recognised that tendency to florid ornamentation, which formed the basis of the style subsequently famous as Byzantine.[33]

Despite the certainty that objects such as the Clementinus consular diptych represented the decadence of the Byzantine period, the diptych was nevertheless cast in plaster by the Arundel Society, who classified it in their catalogue as Class II, 'Roman and Byzantine diptychs, of historical character'. The value of having inferior medieval ivories in juxtaposition with more valued classical examples was expressed by architectural historian Edward Freeman (1823–1892), who stated that classical study 'is imperfect without the medieval study as its ending [...] the medieval study is imperfect without the classical study as its beginning'.[34]

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[32] Wyatt and Oldfield, *Notices*, 6.

[33] Wyatt and Oldfield, *Notices*, 6.

[34] E. A. Freeman, *Cambridge University Reporter* (25 June 1884), 976.

Furthermore, Wyatt was also eager to define this diptych as representing an eastern consul from the city of Constantinople rather than a western Roman one. This east/west dichotomy is a reminder of the nineteenth-century racial reading of history with an Oriental/Occidental structuralist binary at its heart.[35] This cross-cultural reading of history was articulated by Freeman, who described the Byzantine character as 'fixed, staid, and immutable; it is not ancient, modern or mediæval; but, a term of all ages and races, it is Oriental'.[36] For British nineteenth-century scholars, this placed the active and progressive races in the West, in direct opposition to the inactive, static 'other' races of the East. Byzantium lay ambiguously somewhere between the two poles that were marked as Roman and European in name only.[37]

As well as representing the decline of art by the sixth century, the Clementinus diptych possessed another significant worth. Unlike most carved ivories, which were assigned a date based on the analysis of their style (often incorrectly), many consular diptychs could be securely dated. In the case of the Clementinus consular diptych it was dated to 513 AD, the year of Clementinus's consulship.

The allocation of a date to art works was a crucial scholarly preoccupation because the preferred systematic collecting method relied on displays of consecutive specimens from all periods in chronological order. By the mid-nineteenth century, the variety of reproductions were intended to be placed in historical groups (with other casts or alongside originals) in order to represent 'the purest examples of their kind, so that the student may see how the archaic grew into the best time, and the finest periods drooped into the decadence'.[38]

The systematic method of display relied on accurate dating, a practice that highlighted one of the main criticisms levelled at Byzantine art, which was its unchanging nature and the dating difficulty that this presented. The difficulty was articulated by Wyatt, among others, in his introduction to the Arundel Society's fictile ivory catalogue, where he complained that 'no problem is more difficult to the archaeologist than to affix dates to Byzantine antiquities, owing to the religious adherence to certain traditional types through many succeeding centuries'.[39] For this reason, there was considerable enthusiasm

[35] F. Galton, 'The comparative worth of different races', *Hereditary Genius: An Inquiry into its Laws and Consequences* (Gloucester, 1869).

[36] E. A. Freeman, *A History of Architecture* (London, 1849), 7.

[37] Freeman, *A History of Architecture*, 7.

[38] Gatty, 'A paper', 35.

[39] Wyatt and Oldfield, *Notices*, 12.

for consular diptychs, since Roman years were named after whichever consul was in power. For this reason, such diptychs, which often named the consul (as in the case of the Clementinus diptych), became especially prized for their temporal value. According to Pulszky, 'the Consuls remained, therefore, nominally the first magistrates of the empire, and continued to give the name to the year; and even when Constantine transferred the seat of the empire to Byzantium, and transformed it into a Christian state, the office and dignity of the Consuls was not discontinued'.[40] It has recently been estimated that there are approximately thirty dateable extant ivory diptychs.[41] The Clementinus consular diptych, therefore, served as a securely dated anchor in any systematic display of ivory carvings.

The systematic approach to museum display was enthusiastically followed by many British nineteenth-century collectors, most notably the anthropologist and archaeologist General Augustus Henry Lane Fox Pitt Rivers (1827–1900).[42] Pitt Rivers embraced the idea of the evolution of culture whereby the theories of Charles Darwin's 1859 *On the Origin of Species* could be applied to museum collections. In this way, collections of objects in the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford (opened in 1884), such as tools and weapons, were arranged in such a way as to illustrate their development.[43] Such a systematic approach to collecting had risen out of the natural sciences such as botany, whereby specimens could be displayed in a sequential format that allowed for taxonomic comparison and contrast.[44] This became the preferred system for the display of ivories and fictile ivory collections from the mid-nineteenth century onwards.

It is clear that Darwin's impact on nineteenth-century scholarship went beyond natural history to innovative disciplines such as anthropology, archaeology and art history.[45] This entailed adopting a display that conformed to a scientifically ratified type of collecting whereby objects were placed to mimic naturally occurring distributions and hierarchies.[46] The application of Darwinian theoretical concepts to art works enabled them to be presented as

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40 Pulszky, *Catalogue of the Fejérváry Ivories*, 4–5.

41 A. Cutler, 'The Making of the Justinian Diptychs', *Late Antique and Byzantine Ivory Carving: Collected Essays* (Aldershot, 1984), 95.

42 S. M. Pearce, *Museums, Objects and Collections: A Cultural Study* (Leicester, 1992), 85.

43 C. Gosden, F. Larson and A. Petch, *Knowing Things: Exploring the Collections at the Pitt Rivers Museum 1884–1945* (Oxford, 2007).

44 Pearce, *Museums, Objects and Collections*, 84.

45 C. Darwin, *On the Origin of Species* (London, 1861).

46 K. Hill, *Culture and Class in English Public Museums 1850–1914* (Aldershot, 2005), 82.

evolving, from high points in the classical period, into decadent and inferior low points in the medieval or Byzantine, and on to further high points in the Renaissance: a series of peaks and troughs.[47] This cyclical theory centred on civilisation peaks such as the classical age followed by troughs of artistic decline in the Byzantine period. Within this cyclical model, there was also a place for periods of classical revival between the rise and fall.

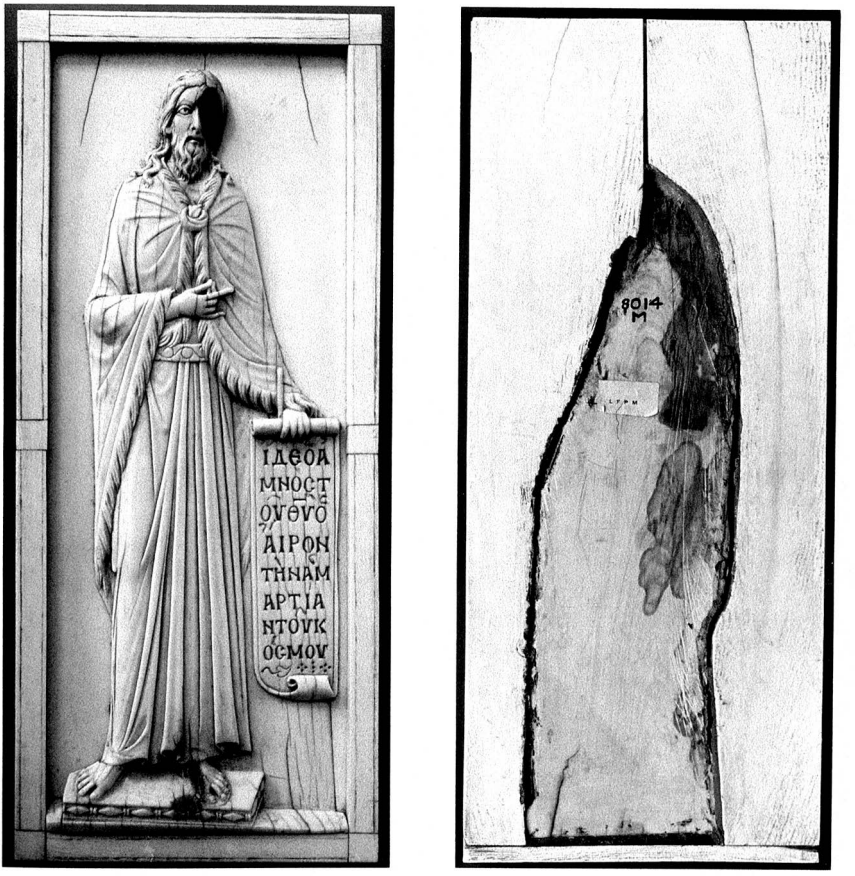

Figure 8.3 St John the Baptist panel (left), reverse of the panel (right), tenth–eleventh century, Byzantine, ivory, figure height 218 mm

Source: Courtesy of National Museums Liverpool (World Museum).

[47] S. M. Pearce, *On Collecting: an Investigation into Collecting in the European Tradition* (New York, 1995), 133–5.

The tenth-/eleventh-century Byzantine St John the Baptist panel fitted this revivalist criterion perfectly (Figure 8.3). The panel depicts St John the Baptist wearing a long belted tunic and a cloak with roughened edges and holding an unfurled scroll. The figure of St John has been cut out from a larger ivory (probably a triptych) and reframed sometime in the eighteenth or nineteenth century. The St John the Baptist was given a miscellaneous classification in the Arundel Society's catalogue as belonging to the Class VII group of fictile ivories.[48] It shared this grouping with some of the so-called 'masterpieces of the second Byzantine School' such as the tenth-century Romanos and Eudokia ivory panel (now in the Louvre, Paris).[49] The positive nineteenth-century responses to this ivory were undoubtedly inspired by the tall and elegant form of the figure of St John, further accentuated by the 'neo-classical' simplicity of the later framing, which convinced nineteenth-century scholars that it represented a brief period of classical revival, later referred to as the 'Macedonian Renaissance'.[50]

Whilst attending the 1855 launch of the Arundel Society's fictile ivory collection, John Ruskin (1819–1900) responded enthusiastically to the St John the Baptist panel. The entomologist, palaeographer and author of the 1876 *Fictile Ivories of the South Kensington Museum*, John Obadiah Westwood (1805–1893), recounted Ruskin's positive reaction to the Byzantine ivory by commenting that it was 'the delicate and elegant workmanship of this tablet manifesting the deepest intensity of feeling' that 'excited the admiration of Mr Ruskin'.[51] In light of the fact that it was the cast of the St John panel rather than the original that Ruskin encountered at the Arundel Society meeting, his appraisal of the ivory was based, not on the actual object, but on a plaster cast. As a result, he might not have fully appreciated the ivory's nuances, such as the signs on the reverse of the panel that the figure had been crudely cut out from a panel and reframed, and the burning to St John's face and foot (evidence that it may have been burnt by candles) (Figure 8.3). In other words, Ruskin might not have realised that the elegant simplicity of the frame that he so admired was not part of the original but a later addition that appealed to a classical predilection.

For nineteenth-century scholars of art, the main value of the ivories was as sculptural relics of the tripartite cyclical development of art. In this way,

[48] Wyatt and Oldfield, *Notices*, 42.

[49] Westwood, *Fictile Ivories*, no. 175, '58.27, 77.

[50] W. Treadgold, *Renaissances before the Renaissance: Cultural Revivals of Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Stanford, CA, 1984), 13.

[51] Westwood, *Fictile Ivories*, no. 175, '58.27, 77.

the rationale behind acquiring a collection of ivory carving casts was their ability to represent different stages in the development of sculpture. Pulszky summarised this worth when he commented that it was 'not the rarity of the monuments, but the completeness of the series' to mark 'every stage in the progress and decline of art' that mattered.[52] In such an arrangement, the Asclepius–Hygieia diptych represented the 'birth' of art in the classical period, the Clementinus diptych characterised the artistic decay or 'death' of art in the Byzantine period, and the St John the Baptist panel represented the regeneration or 'rebirth' of art in a period of classical revival in the tenth century.

In this way, singular ivories were arranged into several manageable value classes in order to create a commercialised whole that mirrored the art historical classification system as understood by nineteenth-century scholars.[53] However, it was the naturalistic, classical-looking ivories such as the Asclepius–Hygieia diptych that were most prized by nineteenth-century scholars and collectors. In a sense, it was the simple, uncoloured and sculptural form of many carved ivories that appealed to this audience who were predisposed to admire classical sculpture as the highest form of art. These sculpted ivory paradigms could, therefore, have found resonance with a nineteenth-century audience because they possessed a certain level of roundness of modelling redolent of the more prized classical period.

From Giorgio Vasari (1511–1574), biographer of the lives of artists in the sixteenth century, to Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717–1768), the 'father' of the neoclassical movement in the eighteenth century, Byzantine art had consistently been represented as the antithesis of classical and classically inspired art.[54] Such views were influenced in no small way by historian Edward Gibbon, whose portrayal of the Late Roman and Byzantine periods, as a time of social decadence and moral corruption in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776–1788), was enthusiastically accepted by British and European scholars alike.[55] Clearly, Gibbon remains one of the greatest influences on the British perception of Byzantium to this day. It has even been suggested that 'the splendour of his style and the wit of his satire killed [off] Byzantine studies for nearly a century' in

[52] Pulszky, 'On the progress and decay of art', 13.

[53] I. Kopytoff, 'The Cultural Biography of Things', in A. Appadurai, ed., *The Social Life of Things* (Cambridge, 1986), 70.

[54] N. Llewellyn, 'The History of Western Art History', in M. Bentley, ed., *Companion to Historiography* (London, 1997), 829.

[55] E. Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, 6 vols (London, 1776–1788).

Britain.[56] Consequently, the Byzantines were perceived as the juxtaposition of two negatives, one racial and one historical: namely oriental and medieval.[57] To the majority of nineteenth-century scholars, therefore, Byzantium represented an unchanging and static alien culture of Oriental Christians whose world was steeped in superstitious traditions.[58] In other words, Constantinople was the 'Other' within an 'orientalist paradigm'.[59]

The knock-on effect of this historical negativity was that the yearly funds of British art institutions were routinely ear-marked for the purchase of antiquities such as classical statuary. This biased acquisition policy can be seen in a further exchange between the British Museum's Anthony Panizzi and the Chairman of the Government Select Committee at their 1860 meeting. In a conversation concerning the institution's acquisition policy, Panizzi made the following statement:

> The trustees in two or three years have spent £8,000 on medieval antiquities [...] and that is the reason why the classical ones are not progressing as they might [...] the trustees bought ivories, very fine in their way, and very proper to have; if you buy medieval ivories, you do not buy Greek statues.[60]

The British Museum's pro-classical acquisition policy and reluctance to add to their medieval collection was further highlighted when Pulszky offered to sell his celebrated ivory collection to the British Museum. They refused to purchase the collection (a decision that was criticised), resulting in the collection being purchased instead by Joseph Mayer, who later presented the collection to the Liverpool Museum.[61]

Despite national institutions' reluctance to collect non-classical art, fictile ivories were eagerly collected in order to illustrate the development of sculpture through the ages in a more convenient way then large plaster casts. This sculptural value might have been encouraged by the inclusion of a series of ivory carvings in popular art exhibitions such as the 1857 Art Treasures

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[56] S. Runciman, 'Gibbon and Byzantium', in G. W. Bowerstock, J. Clive and S. R. Graubard, eds, *Edward Gibbon and the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (London, 1977), 59.

[57] C. Bolt, *Victorian Attitudes to Race* (London, 1971), 9 and 27; R. S. Nelson, 'Living on the Byzantine borders of Western art', *Gesta*, 35/1 (1996), 8.

[58] Nelson, 'Living on the Byzantine borders', 3.

[59] R. Cormack, *Painting the Soul: Icons, Death Masks and Shrouds* (London, 1997), 34.

[60] *Report from the Select Committee on the British Museum*, paragraphs 336–7.

[61] Gibson, *Liverpool Ivories*; 'Antique ivory carvings', *Art Journal*, 1 October 1855.

Exhibition in Manchester.[62] At this exhibition, carved ivory specimens were systematically laid out in order to illustrate the sculptural development from period to period. The display of carved ivories as mainstream sculptural art works confirmed, therefore, that a healthy market existed for ivory reproductions. The demand culminated in the mass production of fictile ivories by the second half of the nineteenth century, ensuring that they became part of public and private collections as far away as Boston, USA and Melbourne, Australia.[63]

In conclusion, this chapter has highlighted the important role played by the fictile ivory collection in many British art institutions during the nineteenth century. The ability of scholars to group ivories together systematically by comparable style and typology resulted in a rise in ivory collecting by the mid-nineteenth century, leading to a new market for collections of reproduction ivories. This popularity gave rise to a large programme of reproductions by the second half of the nineteenth century. The main function of fictile ivories was educational, owing to their ability to illustrate the cyclical development of European sculpture in a systematic and compact way.

I set out to argue that a pro-classical polemic underpinned British nineteenth-century responses to Byzantine ivories perpetuated by the dominance of the classical canon of art, the importance placed on a racial reading of history, and the classical bias of the collecting policies of the national institutions. The sheer weight of institutional classicism, supported by the popularity of the tripartite cyclical view of the development of art, resulted in the typecasting of Byzantine ivories, thereby firmly relegating them to a post-classical period of decay.

[62] J. B. Waring, *A Handbook to the Museum of Ornamental Art, and the Armouries, in the Art Treasures Exhibition 1857* (Manchester, 1857), 151–4; J. B. Waring, ed., *Art Treasures of the United Kingdom Consisting of Examples Selected from the Art Treasures Exhibition 1857* (Manchester, 1858).

[63] G. W. Clarke, *Rediscovering Hellenism: the Hellenic Inheritance and the English Imagination* (Cambridge, 1989), 221; E. Bradford Smith, *Medieval Art in America: Patterns of Collecting 1800–1900* (University Park, PA, 1996), 102.

PART III
Literature

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Chapter 9

Les Amours d'Ismène & Isménias, 'roman très connu': The Afterlife of a Byzantine Novel in Eighteenth-Century France

Ingela Nilsson[1]

There is no doubt that France played a crucial role in the European reception of Byzantine literature, especially in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries under kings such as Francis I (1515–1547) and Louis XIV (1661–1715). The intense scholarly activities focused on Roman and Byzantine historiography, which resulted in numerous acquisitions, editions and translations, as well as important works by the distinguished philologist Du Cange (1610–1688).[2] However, we should not overlook the presence and transmission of other Greek and Byzantine texts during this period. A genre that was certainly gaining ground in the 1600s was the Greek novel, especially the *Aithiopika* by Heliodoros. A contributing, perhaps even crucial, factor to its popularity was a translation into French by Jacques Amyot in 1547. Amyot is perhaps better known for his translation of *Daphnis and Chloe*, which appeared some 10 years later (1559), but he actually earned himself a new position with the Heliodorian translation: Francis I rewarded him with the abbey of Bellozane. Subsequently Amyot was able to leave his job as a professor of Greek and Latin at Bourges and embark upon a career as a learned translator.[3]

[1] Uppsala University.

[2] For a brief overview of the French patronage of Greek learning and Byzantine scholarship in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see A. A. Vasiliev, *History of the Byzantine Empire*, vol. 1 (London, 1952), 3–6; compare more recently M.-F. Auzepy and J.-P. Grelois, eds, *Byzance retrouvée. Erudits et voyageurs français (XVIe–XVIIIe siècles)* (Paris, 2001). On the particular role played by Du Cange, see J.-M. Spieser, 'Du Cange and Byzantium', in R. Cormack and E. Jeffreys, eds, *Through the Looking-glass: Byzantium through British Eyes* (Aldershot, 2000), 199–210.

[3] On Amyot and the importance of his translations, see G. N. Sandy, 'Classical Forerunners of the Theory and Practice of Prose Romance in France: Studies in the Narrative

Once Julius Caesar Scaliger (1484–1558) had stated in his *Poetics* (*Poetices libri septem*, 1560) that every epic poet should read the *Aithiopika* carefully and consider it the best of models,[4] the success of the Greek novel was a fact: Heliodoros was seen as an equal of both Homer and Virgil, which strongly influenced literary works and scholarly discussions of literature in the 1600s.[5] As we reach the eighteenth century, the central position of the Greek novel in the French tradition is implicitly underlined in the article on *roman* in the *Encyclopédie*.[6] After a brief definition of the genre ('récit fictif de diverses avantures merveilleuses ou vraisemblables de la vie humaine') and a reference to 'le plus beau roman du monde, Télémaque',[7] the author of the article, Louis de Jaucourt (LJ), starts by considering the genre's beginning:

> Je ne rechercherai point l'origine des romans, M. Huet a épuisé ce sujet, il faut le consulter.[8] On connoît les amours de Diniace & de Déocillis par Antoine Diogène, c'est le premier des romans grecs.[9] Jamblique a peint les amours de

Form of Minor French Romances of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century', *Antike und Abendland* 28 (1982), 169–91, esp. 169–74; M. Doody, *The True Story of the Novel* (London, 1997), esp. 239–44; L. Plazenet, 'Jacques Amyot and the Greek Novel: The Invention of the French Novel', in G. N. Sandy, ed., *Classical Heritage in France* (Leiden, 2002), 237–80. See also M. Reeve, 'The Re-emergence of Ancient Novels in Western Europe, 1300–1810', in T. Whitmarsh, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the Greek and Roman Novel* (Cambridge, 2008), 286–7.

[4] Scaliger, *Poetics*, 144d1. The treatise went through at least five editions, but the differences are slight; V. Hall, 'The Prefaces to Scaliger's *Poetices libri septem*', *Modern Language Notes* 60/7 (1945) 447–53, 447, n. 1.

[5] For a thorough study of the reception of Heliodoros in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see L. Plazenet, *L'Ebahissement et la délectation. Réception comparée et poétiques du roman grec en France et en Angleterre aux XVIe et XVIIe siècles* (Paris, 1997). See also G. N. Sandy, *Heliodorus* (Boston, 1982), 95–124; T. Hägg, *The Novel in Antiquity* (Oxford, 1983), 198–200; Doody, *The True Story of the Novel*, 243–4.

[6] The *Encyclopédie*, the full title of which was *Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers, etc.*, was edited between 1751 and 1772 under the direction of Diderot and D'Alembert. On the background and context of the *Encyclopédie* project, see D. Roche, *La France des Lumières* (Paris, 1993), 520–22; D. Goodman, *The Republic of Letters: A Cultural History of the French Enlightenment* (Ithaca, NY, and London, 1994), 23–33.

[7] *Les Aventures de Télémaque* by Fénelon, anonymously published in 1699 (reissued in 1717).

[8] This refers to *Traité de l'origine des Romans* by Pierre-Daniel Huet (1670); on this work, see further below.

[9] This refers to *The Incredible Wonders beyond Thule*, in which the protagonists are called Dinias and Derkyllis. The text has been preserved only in the summary by Photios (*Bibliotheca*, cod. 166).

> Rhodanis & de Simonide.[10] Achillès Tatius a composé le roman de Leücippe & de Clitophon. Enfin Héliodore, évêque de Trica dans le quatrieme siecle, a raconté les amours de Théagène & de Chariclée.[11]

De Jaucourt then goes on to regret the subsequent development of the novel, the medieval romance: 'Mais si les fictions romanesques furent chez les Grecs les fruits du goût, de la politesse, & de l'érudition; ce fut la grossiereté qui enfanta dans le onzieme siecle nos premiers romans de chevalerie'. These texts were marked by *barbarie*, which reigned until 'la galanterie prit une nouvelle face au commencement du siecle dernier' with the work of Honoré d'Urfé, *Astrée* (1607–1628). A discussion then follows of other novels of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: *Artamène, ou le Grand Cyrus* (1648–1653) and *Clélie* (1654–1661) by Mademoiselle de Scudéry; *Zaïde* (1671) and *La Princesse de Clèves* (1678) by Madame de Lafayette; the works by the English novelists 'MM. Richardson & Fielding'; and finally the recent *Julie, ou la nouvelle Héloïse* (1761) by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, which is praised as a particularly successful novel. The article closes with a discussion on the utility and pleasure of the novel – a concern that had been part of the debate ever since the 1600s and to which we shall return below.

It is clear that the transmission and popularity of the Greek novel provided a model for, and influenced, novels composed in France from the sixteenth century onwards.[12] One may, for instance, look at the novels mentioned in the *Encyclopédie* article by De Jaucourt. *Les Aventures de Télémaque* recounts the educational travels of Telemachos, son of Odysseus, and was thus a sort of continuation of, or complement to, Homer's *Odyssey*. *Astrée* was a pastoral, but it was also clearly influenced by Heliodoros.[13] *Artamène, ou le Grand Cyrus* drew its material from Herodotos and Xenophon, but the intrigues were

[10] This too refers to a work preserved only in a summary by Photios (*Bibliotheca*, cod. 94): the *Babyloniaka*, with the loving couple Rhodanes and Sinonis.

[11] S.v. *roman* (14:341) in *Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers, etc.*, eds D. Diderot and J. le Rond D'Alembert, University of Chicago: ARTFL Encyclopédie Project, R. Morrissey, ed., at http://encyclopedie.uchicago.edu/ (last accessed 7 October 2014).

[12] See for example, Sandy, 'Classical Forerunners'; Plazenet, 'Jacques Amyot and the Greek Novel'; G. Sandy and S. Harrison, 'Novels Ancient and Modern', in Whitmarsh, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the Greek and Roman Novel*, 299–320.

[13] Doody, *The True Story of the Novel*, 244. On the possible relation between *Astrée*, *Daphnis and Chloe*, and the Byzantine *Hysmine and Hysminias*, see F. Meunier, *Le roman byzantin du XIIe siècle. À la découverte d'un nouveau monde?* (Paris, 2007), 267–8.

composed in the novelistic vein.[14] Madame de Lafayette's works are now seen as the first psychological novels, but they too built on their predecessors and thus on the ancient tradition.[15] Samuel Richardson was strongly influenced by Sidney's *Arcadia Modernized*, which appeared in 1725, and both *Pamela* (1740) and *Clarissa* (1748) show traces from Heliodoros; his contemporary and rival Henry Fielding found himself in the same tradition with his *Shamela* (a reaction to Richardson's *Pamela*) and *Amelia* (1751).[16] And even if Rousseau's novel *Julie, ou la nouvelle Héloïse* in many respects represented a new novelistic direction, it also reached back towards its novelistic predecessors in both form and content.[17]

We may conclude, then, that the ancient Greek novel held a firm position in early modern Europe and not the least in France, but what about their Byzantine successors? As we have seen, the works by Eumathios Makrembolites, Theodore Prodromos, Niketas Eugenianos and Constantine Manasses were not mentioned in the paragraph about the *Encyclopédie* cited above. Were they not part of the Greek heritage that reached France and the rest of Europe in the sixteenth century? Or were they not considered worthy of the same attention as the ancient works, which could be seen as belonging to the classical heritage? The answer to the first question is rather easy: the Byzantine novels, as we shall see, were indeed transmitted to the West just as other Greek texts were during the Renaissance. The second question demands a more complex answer, and this chapter is an attempt to offer some clarification and a tentative interpretation.

I shall restrict my investigation to one of the Byzantine novels and its reception in eighteenth-century France, namely *Hysmine and Hysminias*, written in twelfth-century Constantinople by Eumathios (or Eustathios) Makrembolites.[18] I shall focus on three cases of its adaptation: a translation by

[14] For a crucial example, see Doody, *The True Story of the Novel*, 309–10.

[15] See Doody, *The True Story of the Novel*, 262 on *La princesse de Clèves* as 'an ironic compression of many motifs of older fiction'. We may note that the influence from Heliodoros was in no way restricted to France. Cervantes, for instance, saw his Heliodoran *Los trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda* as his absolute masterpiece.

[16] Doody, *The True Story of the Novel*, 298.

[17] The full title of this epistolary novel was *Lettres de deux amans habitans d'une petite ville au pied des Alpes, recueillies et publiées par J. J. Rousseau*. On the author as the alleged editor of manuscripts in the eighteenth century, see below p. 186–7 and nn. 59–60. For a reappraising overview of the rise of the novel in Europe (though with a certain focus on England), see J. Mander, ed., *Remapping the Rise of the European Novel* (Oxford, 2007).

[18] Greek text and Italian translation of all four novels (including the fragments of Manassses) in *Il romanzo bizantino del XII secolo. Teodoro Prodromo – Niceta Eugeniano –*

Pierre-François Godard de Beauchamps (1729), a discussion of erotic pleasure in the philosophical treatise *L'art de jouir* by Julien Offray de La Mettrie (1751) and an opera by Pierre Laujon (music by Jean-Benjamin de La Borde), first performed in 1763. My aim is not to offer an exhaustive study of the Byzantine novels in eighteenth-century France, but rather to draw attention to the presence of Byzantine material in a context that, to my knowledge, has not yet been explored in any detail by Byzantinists.[19]

Hysmine and Hysminias from Constantinople to Paris

The novel by the otherwise unknown Eumathios Makrembolites, composed in the courtly circles of Constantinople of the mid-twelfth century, is the story of a young couple – Hysmine and Hysminias – who fall in love and decide to elope together, are separated during a storm at sea, and then struggle towards their eventual reunion and marriage. The motifs of the story are thus clearly drawn from the ancient Greek novel, and in particular *Leucippe and Clitophon* by Achilles Tatius. *Hysmine and Hysminias* may accordingly be seen as a paraphrase of an ancient model, but the literary form ties in with and closely conforms to the rhetorical trends of the twelfth century so that the text itself may be said to be in focus at the expense of the plot's intrigue.[20] This has led to

Eustazio Macrembolita – Constantino Manasse, ed. F. Conca (Torino, 1994). For a recent English translation with notes and useful introductions to each novel, see E. Jeffreys, *Four Byzantine Novels* (Theodore Prodromos, *Rhodanthe and Dosikles*; Eumathios Makrembolites, *Hysmine and Hysminias*; Constantine Manasses, *Aristandros and Kallithea*; Niketas Eugenianos, *Drosilla and Charikles*) (Liverpool, 2012). On the name Eustathios/Eumathios, see Jeffreys, *Four Byzantine Novels*, 159–60.

[19] While this volume was in its final stages of production, a detailed and thorough article dealing with the French translations of Makrembolites appeared: C. Jouanno, 'Fortune d'un roman byzantin à l'époque moderne. Étude sur les traductions françaises d'*Hysminé et Hysminias* de la Renaissance au XVIIIe siècle', *Byzantion* 84 (2014), 203–34. Unfortunately I have not been able to take this important study into account here, but I warmly recommend it as a complement to the present survey, along with R. Beaton, 'Hopeful Monsters or Living Fossils? The Comnenian Novels and Their Medieval and Modern Reception', in P. Roilos, ed., *Medieval Greek Storytelling: Fictionality and Narrative in Byzantium* (Wiesbaden, 2014), 245–52.

[20] On *Hysmine and Hysminias* and its relation to both *Leucippe and Clitophon* and the twelfth-century context, see I. Nilsson, *Erotic Pathos, Rhetorical Pleasure: Narrative Technique and Mimesis in Eumathios Makrembolites' Hysmine and Hysminias* (Uppsala, 2001); on the Byzantine novels in general, see R. Beaton, *The Medieval Greek Romance*, 2nd edn (London and New York, 1996). For two recent studies of *Leucippe and Clitophon*, see

harsh judgments of Makrembolites' novel as anything from a 'slavish imitation' of Achilles Tatius[21] to simply 'unbelievably tedious'.[22]

In spite of the disdain expressed by modern scholars, Makrembolites' novel seems to have been frequently read during the centuries after its composition, all the way up to the eighteenth century.[23] After the Fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks in 1453, Greek novels swiftly became known and popular in Western Europe. The Komnenian novels were also transmitted to the West and read in both original and translated versions. *Hysmine and Hysminias* has survived in 43 manuscripts, most of them dating from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.[24] This is a considerable number of manuscripts; a comparison with the manuscripts of the *Aithiopika* (24) and *Leucippe and Clitophon* (23) indicates that Makrembolites' novel was, in fact, among the most frequently read Greek novels during the Renaissance.[25] The first printed translation of *Hysmine and Hysminias* was in Italian and appeared in Florence in 1550: *Gli amori d'Ismenio composti per Eustathio Philosopho, & di Greco tradotti per M. Lelio Carani*.[26] It was popular enough to be reprinted in Venice

H. Morales, *Vision and Narrative in Achilles Tatius' Leucippe and Clitophon* (Cambridge, 2004) and M. Laplace, *Le roman d'Achille Tatios. 'Discours panégyrique' et imaginaire romanesque* (Bern, 2007); for a general overview of the ancient novel, see Whitmarsh, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the Greek and Roman Novel*.

[21] B. E. Perry, *The Ancient Romances: A Literary–Historical Account of their Origins* (Berkeley, CA, 1967), 103 for the Komnenian novels as 'slavish imitations of Achilles Tatius and Heliodorus which were written in the twelfth century by such miserable pedants as Eustathius Macrembolites, Theodorus Prodromus, and Nicetas Eugenianus, trying to write romance in what they thought was the ancient manner', concluding 'of these no account need to be taken'.

[22] C. Mango, *Byzantium: The Empire of New Rome* (London, 1980), 237: 'it is true that the four specimens we possess are unbelievably tedious, but we are not now concerned with their slender literary merit'.

[23] This chapter will focus on the reception of *Hysmine and Hysminias* in the post-Byzantine period, but note also the indications that this novel influenced contemporary Byzantine literature; see K. Plepelits, *Eustathios Makrembolites, Hysmine und Hysminias. Eingeleitet, übersetzt und erläutert* (Stuttgart, 1989), 76, n. 158, with references.

[24] See A. Cataldi Palau, 'La tradition manuscrite d'Eustathe Macrembolitès', *Revue d'histoire des textes* 10 (1980), 75–113, and now also Jeffreys, *Four Byzantine Novels*, 166–7.

[25] Plepelits, *Hysmine und Hysminias*, 77, indicates 23 manuscripts for Tatius (which is congruent with the number of manuscripts given by Vilborg in his 1955 edition) and 27 for Heliodoros (compare the 24 manuscripts listed by J. R. Morgan, 'Heliodoros', in J. Schmeling, ed., *The Novel in the Ancient World*, 2nd edn (Boston, MA, and Leiden, 2003), 417–56, 424).

[26] The very first translation appears to have been into Latin, but this was never printed; see Plepelits, *Hysmine und Hysminias*, 77–8 with nn. 161–2.

in 1560 and 1566, and Carani's translation became the basis of translations into other European languages.[27]

The first French translation was printed in 1559 (Lyon) under the title *Les amours d'Ismenius, composez par le Philosophe Eustathius, & traduistz de Grec en François par Jean Louveau d'Orléans*. The edition has an elaborately decorated title page and the translation is preceded by an epigram 'sur l'argument du present livre' (composed by a certain B. Alixet) and 'Sonet à la France en grace de I. Louveau' by Guillaume de la Tayssonnière (*c*.1530–1586), praising the fortunate France for this translation. The latter was the author of love poems published under the title *Les amoureuses occupations* (1555), the title page of which was recycled for the 1559 translation of *Hysmine and Hysminias*. The second translation into French (1582) is not a translation from the Greek text, but an adaptation of Carani's Italian translation into French: *Les Amours d'Isménias et de la chaste Isménie, traduicts du grec d'Eustatius en vulgaire toscan par Lelio Carani, et depuis fais françois par Hierosme d'Avost, de Laval*.[28] Some thirty years later Gilbert Gaulmin (Paris, 1617) presented the *editio princeps*, which also contained a Latin translation (*Eustathii de Ismeniae et Ismenes amoribus libri XI. Gilbertus Gaulminus Molinensis primus Graecè ex Regia Bibliotheca edidit, & Latine vertit*)[29] and soon thereafter yet another translation into French, *Les advantures amoureuses d'Ismène & d'Isménie*, translated by G. Colletet (Paris, 1625). As we now enter the seventeenth century, the novel has also entered the stage of scholarly discussion, and we need to briefly consider the contemporary cultural and literary situation in order to understand the position of the Greek novel.

[27] The German translation of 1573, for instance, is said to be based on the Italian translation: *Ismenius. Histori von der Lieb des Jünglings Ismeni und der Jungfrawen Ismene aus dem Griechischen und Italienischen verteutscht* (Strasburg, 1573); compare also the 1594 translation by a certain 'Joh. Christ. Artopeo [?] gennant Wolckenstern', which seems to have been reprinted in 1610: 'Erstlich durch Eustachium Philosophum in Griechischer Sprache beschrieben, nachmals durch Lelium Carani in Italiano transferiert, ietzt aber von Joh. Christ. Artoxeo [?], genanndt Wolckenstern in teutsch gefertigt' (both printed in Strasburg). For a list (though not entirely complete) of translations into Latin, Italian, German and French, see S. F. W. Hoffman, *Bibliographisches Lexicon der gesammten Litteratur der Griechen*, 2nd edition (Leipzig, 1838), vol. 2, 115–16; see also Plepelits, *Hysmine und Hysminias*, 78.

[28] Jérôme d'Avost (1558–1592) was a French poet and translator who studied in Paris before travelling in Germany, the Netherlands, Italy and Spain. His translation of *Hysmine and Hysminias* was published just as he had returned to France and been admitted to the court of Marguerite de Valois, Queen of Navarre. See E. Picot, *Les Français italianisants au XVIe siècle*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1906), 215–22.

[29] For another edition of 'Eustatios' that was planned but never appeared, see Reeve, 'The Re-Emergence of Ancient Novels', 290.

The Danger and Pleasure of Reading Novels

We have already noted that Greek literature influenced the first novels written in French – for instance *Les Aventures de Télémaque* by Fénelon and *Artamène, ou le Grand Cyrus* (1648–1653) by Mademoiselle de Scudéry – and that Greek novels, especially the *Aithiopika*, were an important influence for many others, such as *Astrée* by Honoré d'Urfé (1607–1628). At the same time as the position of the novel was under discussion in seventeenth-century France, the dangers versus the benefits of novelistic writing and reading were debated. Part of the debate was also about the origin of the genre, which could be ascribed to the ancient Greeks. Jean-Pierre Camus (1584–1652) discusses the novel in the afterword known as *Dilude de Pétronille* (1626) and remarks, 'les Grecs ont autrefois excellé en ce genre d'écrire qu'ils appellent amatoire'; he also includes *Hysmine and Hysminias* in his list of Greek novels: 'nous en [avons] comme les originaux en La Cariclée d'Heliodore, en La Caride d'Athénagoras, en L'Ismené d'Eustathius, au Clitophon d'Achille Tatius, au Daphnis de Longus'.[30]

The focus on the origin of the genre is central to some of the arguments for and against the novel. One of the more severe critics of the genre was Nicolas Boileau-Despréaux (1636–1711), who in his *Les héros de roman* (1668) argued that the novel lacked *ancienneté* and rules, since it was not known by Aristotle and Horace.[31] Moreover, due to its immoral content the genre may even be seen as dangerous.[32] Boileau's ideas must be seen in relation to his involvement in the so-called *Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*. The 'Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns' is said to have been initiated by Charles Perrault (1628–1703), who was on the side of the Moderns (supporting literature of the century of Louis XIV) against the Ancients (supporting ancient literature).[33] Perrault argued that the enlightened rule of Louis XIV made the

[30] J.-P. Camus, *Dilude de Pétronille* (1626), published as an afterword to the novel *Pétronille*; quoted by H. Coulet, *Le roman jusqu'à la Révolution*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1968), 29–32, at 30.

[31] *Les héros du roman* was composed in the form of a Lucianic dialogue taking place in the underworld, satirising, for example, Mademoiselle de Scudéry. On the dialogue and its place in the contemporary critique of the novel, see the thorough introduction to the edition by T. F. Crane, *Les héros du roman. Dialogue de Nicolas Boileau-Despréaux* (Boston, MA, 1902), and briefly in Doody, *The True Story of the Novel*, 266–7.

[32] See for example as early as 1626 the treatise by Fancan, arguing that novels falsify the truth and lead their readers to immoral passions; cited in Coulet, *Le roman jusqu'à la Révolution*, vol. 2, 33–4.

[33] See especially his *Le Siècle de Louis le Grand* (1687) and *Parallèle des Anciens et des Modernes* (1688–1692) in which he attempted to prove the superiority of the literature of

present age superior in every respect to ancient times; this meant that modern French literature was superior to the works of antiquity (even to Homer). Boileau, however, maintained that the best literature must be based on imitation of the ancients – and since the novelistic rules had not been defined by Aristotle, it was a problematic genre.

It is against this background that Pierre Daniel Huet (1630–1721) wrote his defence of the novel, tracing its ancient origin back not only to the ancient Greek and Roman novel, but even to oriental (Arabic and Syriac) traditions.[34] *De l'origine des romans* was first published as a preface to Marie de la Fayette's novel *Zaïde* (1671), but it was later reworked in several stages and appeared in separate (more elaborate) editions and numerous translations.[35] Huet's treatise has become known as 'the first history of fiction', containing a crucial definition of the genre ('fictions d'aventures amoureuses, *écrites* en prose avec art, pour le plaisir et l'instruction des lecteurs') along with reflexions on both the positive and negative aspects of novels.[36] As for the ancient Greek novels, Heliodoros was considered superior, perhaps partly due to his identity as a Christian (pp. 34–6); Tatius, on the other hand, had a more pleasant style (p. 37) and he too was seen as a Christian.[37] Huet proceeds more or less chronologically, and treats the Byzantine novels after a discussion of the 'spiritual novel' *Barlaam and Iosaphat* attributed to John of Damascus (p. 50). He includes only the

his century. Perrault had come to the defence of Mlle. de Scudéry after the attacks of Boileau, which was to be the beginning of the long *querelle* between him and Boileau; see Crane, Introduction to *Les héros du roman*, 30–31.

[34] For an interesting discussion on the ancient novel and the 'aesthetics of foreignness' in early modern French fiction, see E. R. Welch, *A Taste for the Foreign: Worldly Knowledge and Literary Pleasure in Early Modern French Fiction* (Newark, NJ, 2011), esp. 2–15.

[35] On the complex process of reworking and rewriting of Huet's treatise, see C. Esmein, 'Le traité de l'origine des romans de Huet, apologie du roman baroque ou poétique du roman classique?', *Cahiers de l'Association internationale des études françaises* 56 (2004), 417–36, 417–18. By the eighteenth century it was still well known and appreciated, as indicated by the reference to Huet's work in the *Encyclopédie* (cited above, p. 172). The treatise of Huet was translated into English as early as 1672, but it became more known in the translation by Stephen Lewis first published in 1715 and then frequently reprinted up until the nineteenth century. I cite the first edition, the preface to *Zaïde* (1671).

[36] On Huet's dislike of the ancient novels, see D. Selden, 'Genre of Genre', in J. Tatum, ed., *The Search for the Ancient Novel* (Baltimore, MD, 1994), 39–64, esp. 39–41, and Doody, *The True Story of the Novel*, 260–61. For a tentative revaluation of Huet's treatise, see Esmein, 'Le traité de l'origine des romans de Huet'.

[37] This information might have been drawn from the *Suda*, which says of Achilles Tatius that he later became a Christian and a bishop (s.v. Achilleus Statios). Photios does not call Tatius a Christian, but he says that Heliodoros was a bishop (*Bibliotheca*, codices 73 and 87).

novels by Theodore Prodromos and Eumathios Makrembolites, arguing that the latter should not be identified with Eustathios of Thessalonike and pointing out that some manuscripts contain the name 'Eumathios'.[38] The learned Eustathios (who, like Huet himself, had been a bishop) could not have written a work 'aussi miserable' as *Hysmine and Hysminias*, argues Huet:

> Quoy qu'il en soit, rien n'est plus froid, rien n'est plus plat, rien n'est plus ennuyeux: nulle bienseance, nulle vray-semblance, nulle conduite: c'est le travail d'un escolier, ou de quelque chetif Sophiste, qui meritoit d'estre escolier toute sa vie.[39]

The novel by Prodromos is almost as bad, continues Huet, though with 'un peu plus d'art' and with the significant difference that it is written in verse, '& cela luy rend plus pardonnable son stile trop figuré, & trop licentieux' (p. 52). Huet then moves on to discuss *Daphnis & Chloe*, which he thinks is very similar to the Komnenian novels due to its 'sophistic' character (pp. 52–3). He finds it childish and silly; a bit surprising, perhaps, considering that he had himself supposedly produced a translation of the pastorals by Longos at the age of 18.[40] In spite of Huet's disapproval of the Komnenian novels, they are included in the list of Greek novels that have followed the 'rules' of novelistic writing that the Greeks had successfully refined:

> De tous les Romanciers Grecs que je vous ay nommez, les seuls qui se soient assujettis à ces règles sont Antonius Diogenés, Lucien, Athenagoras, Iamblique, Heliodore, Achillés Tatius, Eustathius, & Theodorus Prodromus. (p. 56)

We may note that Huet does not make any formal distinction between ancient and Byzantine novels, nor between Lucianic 'fringe novels' and 'spiritual

[38] These novels had both been edited by Gaulmin (not Eugenianos) and Huet apparently knows them from that edition (p. 51). On the name Eustathios/Eumathios, see above note 18.

[39] Huet, *De l'origine des romans*, p. 51. The section on the Komnenian novels was later expanded, but remained negative. On the terms *bienséance* and *vraisemblance* in eighteenth-century criticism of the novel, see Doody, *The True Story of the Novel*, 286.

[40] See 'Eloge historique de Mr. Huet', preface to the posthumously published *Traité philosophique de la foiblesse de l'esprit humain* (London, 1741), xxvi: 'Une traduction Latine des Amours de Daphnis & de Chloé, faite a dix-huit ans'. Compare R. de Juvigny, *Les bibliothéques françoises de La Croix du Maine et de du Verdier*, vol. 4 (Paris, 1773), p. 588 (on Longus): 'Feu M. Huet, comme nous l'apprend, d'après lui [...] en fit, à dix-huit ans, une Latine, qui apparement demeurera toujours manuscrite, si tant est qu'elle existe'.

novels' such as *Barlaam and Iosaphat*: they are all 'romans grecs'. However, this does not mean that Huet was ignorant of the dating of the later novels: he places Makrembolites and Prodromos correctly in the reign of Emperor Manuel I Komnenos (1143–1180).[41] In fact, for any learned reader of *Hysmine and Hysminias* in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the authorial name attached to the title of the novel would indicate the Byzantine context, since Eustathios – whether identified with the Christian bishop of Thessalonike or not – is not an ancient Greek name.[42] The term 'roman grec' was accordingly a generic designation, denoting the original language and the general storyline rather than the date of the individual work.

Huet's interest in Greek novels must be understood against the background of the on-going discussions on the baroque novel and the debate between Ancients and Moderns.[43] As a frequent visitor to the salons of Madeleine de Scudéry and an avid supporter of the novel, Huet took the side of the Ancients and his treatise of the novel may even be seen as a direct response to the critique expressed by Boileau.[44] His dislike for 'sophistic novels' may also be considered from this classicistic perspective, firmly based on stylistic characteristics rather than on chronological aspects.

The debate on the novel went on, and Huet's seventeenth-century defence was followed by others in the eighteenth century, most notably *De l'usage des romans* (1734) by Nicolas Lenglet du Fresnoy, an ironic defence against the

[41] Huet, *De l'origine des romans*, 55–6: 'Le roman de Théodorus Prodromus, et celui qu'on attribue à Eustathius, évêque de Théssalonique, qui fleurrisait sous l'empire de Manuel Comnène, vers le milieu du douzième siècle, sont environ de même force'. Compare Plazenet, 'Jacques Amyot and the Greek Novel', 237, who states that Makrembolites 'was not identified as belonging to the twelfth century' and was read in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries only 'because it closely imitated the other three' – that is, Tatius, Heliodoros and Longus.

[42] Moreover, the term 'Byzantine' was not yet in general use. In the *Encyclopédie* the term ('Byzance', 'Bizance', 'byzantine') refers almost exclusively to the ancient site of Constantinople; see also Spieser, 'Du Cange and Byzantium', 209–10. Eustathios of Thessalonike, on the other hand, was an intellectual superstar, especially among scholars of Latin and Greek, who greatly admired his commentaries on the Homeric epics. The fact that his name was attached to the novel by Makrembolites is therefore not without significance for its reception.

[43] For a fascinating reading of Huet's treatise set against the intellectual context of the period, see A. G. Shelford, *Transforming the Republic of Letters: Pierre-Daniel Huet and European Intellectual Life, 1650–1720* (Rochester, NY, 2007), especially 108–12.

[44] The salons were most certainly an important space for the development of the novels in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; see briefly Doody, *The True Story of the Novel*, 265. On the salon as a socio-cultural phenomenon in the eighteenth century, see A. Liltis, *Le monde des salons. Sociabilité et mondanité à Paris au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 2005). The term itself is, however, a nineteenth-century invention; see Liltis, *Le monde des salons*, 15–58.

accusations and rules for writing.[45] Another work, 'Les romans' (1761) by Augustin Simon Irailh,[46] pleaded for the *ancienneté* of the novels and even appointed Heliodoros 'le Fénélon grec'.[47] Even if Irailh's primary concern was the modern novel in France, Spain and England, this statement indicates that the Greek novel was still a natural frame of reference in a novelistic discussion of the eighteenth century.[48]

Hysmine and Hysminias in a New Translation

As we reach the 1700s, the Greek novel had been part of literary discussions in France for two centuries and *Hysmine and Hysminias* had established itself in the French-language area (with translations in 1559, 1582, 1625). It is accordingly not very surprising that yet another translation appeared in 1729. It was done by Pierre-François Godard de Beauchamps (1689–1761), a libertine novelist and translator known above all as a dramatic writer and theatre historian.[49] We cannot be sure that Beauchamps actually translated the original Greek text into French, even though it is probable that he knew at least some Greek.[50] It could indeed be argued that *Les amours d'Ismène et d'Isménias* is rather a translation of the Byzantine novel into

[45] Nicolas Lenglet du Fresnoy, *De l'usage des romans où l'on fait voir leur utilité et leurs différents caractères. Avec une Bibliothèque des romans accomp. de remarques critiques sur leur choix et leurs éditions* (1734) (Genève, 1970).

[46] Simon-Augustin, abbé Irailh, 'Les romans', in *Querelles littéraires, ou Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire des révolutions de la république des lettres, depuis Homère jusqu'à nos jours* (Paris, 1761), vol. 2, 334–53. Note also 'La querelle des anciens & des modernes', 285–319.

[47] Irailh, 'Les romans', 335. Referring to the debate of the previous century, Irailh discussed the utility of the genre and the stance of Boileau, who 'fit tout ce qu'il put pour les [the novels] décrier au milieu du derner siècle' (338) and who mocked the 'bourgeoises de la rue saint Honoré' (339) in his mean satire of, among others, Mlle de Scudéry.

[48] So does the harsh criticism of Diderot directed at a 'Greek novel' written by l'abbé Barthélemy, *Analyse d'un petit roman qui vient de paraître sous le nom de Carite et de Polydore* (1760); on this interesting contribution to the novelistic debate, see E. Mass, 'Diderot, l'abbé Barthélemy et la critique du roman en 1760', *Romanistisches Jahrbuch* 37 (1986), 127–36.

[49] According to the *Petite bibliothèque des théâtres* (1787), eleven of his plays were staged between 1718 and 1731. He also wrote the treatise *Recherches sure les théâtres de France depuis 1161 jusqu'à nos jours* (1735). For a more recent biography, see J.-P. Dubost, 'Godard de Beauchamps', in *Romanciers libertins du XVIIIe siècle*, vol. 1, ed. P. Wald Lasowski (Paris, 2000), 1035–9 (with a bibliography at 1040–42).

[50] Since he produced also the first translation into French of the novel by Prodromos, he should have known Greek; however, he might have translated from Latin or Italian.

eighteenth-century aesthetics, considering the numerous reworkings of the text. However, we should note that the relation to the original is close and that the adaptation has been performed with great attention to detail.[51]

Changes have been made by Beauchamps to both the narrative structure and the storyline of *Hysmine and Hysminias*. Even though the story is basically the same, the order of events has in some cases been altered and, more importantly, the actions and function of some characters have been manipulated. For example, the hero's best friend Kratisthenes, who in the Byzantine original disappears after he has helped Hysminias understand love and elope with Hysmine, here returns at the end of the story to assist also with the family reunion. Kratisthenes, in the French version, is also present at the wedding of Hysmine and Hysminias, which has been turned into a double wedding, since Hysminias's brother Kallisthenes (invented by Beauchamps) marries Rhodope after she has been rejected by Hysminias.[52] The removal of the original division into eleven chapters makes the rearrangement of the text and plot difficult to detect, even for someone who knows the Greek original; this effect has been achieved by the partial close translation of certain passages, such as the opening scene, some of the intimate scenes between the young lovers, and some conversations between Hysminias and Kratisthenes.

The decisive changes of Beauchamps concern the removal of almost all ekphrastic passages of the Greek text and the insertion of short poems and Graeco-Roman mythological references. The long and detailed descriptions of a garden with symbolic paintings and the interpretation of these paintings by Hysminias and Kratisthenes, playing a crucial role in the emotional development of the hero in the Byzantine novel, have been replaced by a relatively brief depiction of a garden of a quite different kind and with different works of art. The classical allusions used by Makrembolites in order to associate his garden with the Homeric garden of Alkinous and the Elysian fields (*Hysmine*, 1.4.3) have been combined with an inserted reference to Flora and Pomona along with a poem (*Ismène*, 5). The artificial (Byzantine) fountain has

Jean-Pierre Dubost argues that Beauchamps adapted the translation by Guillaume Colletet (Paris, 1625); see Dubost, 'Godard de Beauchamps', 1035, n. 2. See below, note 62.

[51] For a more detailed reading of the two texts from the perspective of narrative desire and translation practice, see I. Nilsson, 'In Response to Charming Passions: Erotic Readings of a Byzantine Novel', in A. Cullhed et al., eds, *Pangs of Love and Longing: Configurations of Desire in Premodern Literature* (Cambridge, 2013), 176–202.

[52] Illustration from the 1743 edition of Beauchamps, the same edition that will be used for citation in the following. On the role of Kratisthenes in *Hysmine and Hysminias*, see Nilsson, *Erotic Pathos, Rhetorical Pleasure*, 161–2 and 256–8.

been replaced by a natural 'grotte rustique' with a river and channels (*Ismène*, 5–6).[53] There is no wall surrounding Beauchamps's garden, but instead a breathtaking view over the surrounding fields; on a terrace bronze statues on marble bases are placed – eight sculpture groups representing mythological characters and situations. Kratisthenes looks at them and explains the statues, since he is familiar with the representations.

Kratisthenes thus plays an exegetical role in Beauchamps's version just as in the Komnenian original, but he does not decipher Eros to the hero Hysminias. The young men discover a room (*salon*) with a ceiling painted as the sky and paintings decorating the walls (*Ismène*, 16–17). The paintings, attributed to ancient painters,[54] are described as *emblèmes* – riddles to be solved. Hysminias loses himself in them; Kratisthenes, however, does not help him understand them, but rather warns him: 'Sçavez-vous, me dit Cratisthene, en me tirant par le bras, sçavez-vous que tout ceci n'est point fait pour vous? Ces peintures pourraient donner atteinte à cette indifférence qui paroit vous être si chere' (*Ismène*, 17). Hysminias thus leaves without getting an explanation, but he still understands they represent love: 'J'en avois pourtant assez vû, pour ne pouvoir douter qu'elles ne fussent faites à la gloire de l'Amour' (*Ismène*, 18).[55]

The adaptation technique used by Beauchamps could be described as a sort of re-Hellenisation of the Byzantine version of an ancient Greek novel; insertions such as 'l'exemple & le modèle de la Grèce' and 'ville celèbre de la Grèce' (*Ismène*, 2) are employed in order to place the fictional cities of Makrembolites more firmly in ancient Greece. The statues depicting mythological scenes could be seen as part of that strategy, while at the same time recalling contemporary garden decorations; Kratisthenes understands them since he has travelled through all of Greece, just like a young man of the eighteenth century would have visited Italy and Greece on his *grand tour*. The elaborate paintings and fountain of the Byzantine original have been exchanged for an emphasis on simplicity and nature, as in the description of the garden of Hysminias's father Themistheus: 'Il n'y avoit point de ces beautés frapantes, qu'on admire dans ces palais superbes, où les Grecs voluptueux égalent, surpassent aujourd'hui le luxe des Rois de l'Asie. Tout y étoit simple sans négligence, propre sans faste, utile sans dépense'. Sosthenes – who owns

[53] Compare one of the 'natural' gardens described by Longus in *Daphnis & Chloe*, 4.2–4.

[54] The artists' names are given in *cartouches* under the paintings: Apelles, Zeuxis, Protogenes, and one empty cartouche (p. 17).

[55] The description that follows closely mirrors the description of Eros in the Byzantine original, there represented as a painting on the wall of the garden (*Hysmine*, 2.7–11).

the luxurious garden filled with flowers and statues – is delighted and exclaims: 'Heureux les hommes qui n'aiment, qui ne suivent que la nature!' (*Ismène*, 42–3). There is thus an interesting element of 'simple' Greeks being contrasted with Asians and 'Asianised' Greeks, which may be compared either to ancient Greeks versus Byzantines or Greeks within the Ottoman Empire (at the time referred to as *Grecs modernes*)[56] or to French (baroque) versus English ('natural') garden ideals.[57]

The Byzantine novel with its complex rhetorical form and elaborate *automata* has thus been turned into a much more 'classical' Graeco-Roman story with numerous influences from eighteenth-century aesthetics; it is a strongly abbreviated and reworked adaptation of the original. This reworking is emphasised by the author–translator himself in the preface, addressing a certain Madame L. C. D. F. B.:

> Madame,
>
> Vous serez obéie. Je vais me mettre à l'ouvrage; j'y suis. Ce n'est pas peu pour un homme dont vous connoissez la paresse: je la croyais à l'épreuve, & sans des ordres aussi absolus que les vôtres, je ne me serois pas trompé. Tenez-moi quelque compte du sacrifice que je vous fait, il ne me restoit à vous faire que celui-là. Souvenez-vous, s'il vous plaît, que vous ne m'avez point assujéti à la seche exactitude d'une traduction litterale: j'use de la liberté que vous m'avez donnée; je change, j'ajoûte, je retranche: j'évite des fautes; j'en fais de nouvelles: vous gagnerez d'un côté, vous perdrez de l'autre. Les Sçavants s'en scandaliseront: ils ne manqueront pas, si par hazard ils se donnent la peine de me lire, de me faire un crime de leze-antiquité de ne point trouver dans mes *Amours d'Ismine & d'Ismenias* celles d'Eusthathe. Je serois plus circonspect, si j'écrivois pour être imprimé, car enfin je n'ignore pas qu'il faut ménager tout le monde: mais, Madame, je n'écris que pour vous, & peu vous importe des idées & des expressions Grecques, pourvû que vous ne trouviez les miennes ni bizarres, ni forcées. Je n'en suis guéres plus à mon aise; il faut vous amuser & vous plaire,

[56] Cf. for example the novel *L'Histoire d'une Grecque moderne* (1740) by Abbé Prévost, telling the story of a young Greek woman kept prisoner in the Ottoman harem in Constantinople, 'liberated' by a French gentleman whose love, however, she refuses. There is a rich bibliography on this novel; most interesting in this context is perhaps J. V. Douthwaite, 'Embattled Eros: The Cultural Politics of Prévost's *Grecque moderne*', *L'Esprit créateur* 32/3 (1992), 87–97.

[57] See for example J. D. Hunt, *Garden and Grove. The Italian Renaissance Garden in the English Imagination: 1600–1750* (Princeton, NJ, 1986), 90–99 on art and nature.

> deux choses peu faciles; je n'entreprens ni l'une ni l'autre. Je vous l'ai déjà dit, je ne fais qu'obéir. Un auteur ne peut s'abstenir d'une Préface: celle-ci cera courte; elle est finie. Songez au reste que c'est Ismenias qui va parler, dès que je vous aurai assuré que je suis avec beaucoup de respects,
>
> Madame,
>
> Votre très-humble & Très-obéissant serviteur*** (*Ismène*, v–viii)

Beauchamps, just like any author–translator of his time, is very much aware of this method; he knows about the 'pros and cons' of literary adaptation. We may lose the specific literary style of the Komnenian period (repetition and symmetry on the level of both structure and content), but we win a narrative rearranged and improved according to contemporary literary trends. The Byzantine intrigue – repetitive, descriptive and slow, with little action – has been shortened, compressed and 'closed' according to the new literary rules. So the novel's reading audience (such as Madame L. C. D. F. B., the real or implied commissioner of the translation) should appreciate it, although 'learned men' (*les Sçavants*) may accuse the author–translator of *lèse antiquité* when they cannot find the text of Eustathios in the translation.[58] However, since the translation is not for printing but for personal use, this does not matter – *Madame* does not care for Greek expressions and ideas.

We should not take the statements of the preface too seriously. The anonymity of the author–translator and the mysterious *Madame* belong to the genre, and the mischievous attitude to the ancient original and 'the tradition' can be found in numerous prefaces to eighteenth-century novels.[59] A popular topos was that of 'le manuscrit trouvé', employed by Beauchamps in his novel *Histoire du prince Apprius* (1728), presented as, 'manuscrit persan trouvé dans la bibliothèque du roi de Perse, détrôné par Mamouth, en 1722. Traduction française par M. Esprit, gentilhomme provençal, servant dans les troupes

[58] A wordplay on *lèse majesté* (*laesa maiestas*), injured majesty – the crime of violating a majesty; for a use in the eighteenth century, see *Dictionnaire de Trévoux* (1771), cited in Y. Vadé, *Ce que modernité veut dire* (Bordeaux, 1994), vol. 1, 43.

[59] Compare for example Beauchamps's two versions of Prodromos, one 'translation' and one 'imitation': *Les amours de Rhodanthe et Dosiclès, traduites du grec de Theodorus Prodromus* (1746, with an *avertissement* on Prodromos) and *Imitation du roman grec de Theodore Prodromus* (1746, with a 'Lettre de l'auteur à Monsieur de ***' on a translation made by someone else!). Both prefaces are quoted in J. Herman and C. Angelet, *Recueil de préfaces de romans du XVIIIe siècle, vol. 1: 1700–1750* (Sainte-Étienne and Leuven, 1999), 137–9.

de Perse' (published in 'Constantinople' – that is, Paris). The topos was so common that it most probably did not deceive the reader, but rather created an appreciated exotic framing of the story.[60] As for the implied private use of the translation, it seems to have been part of the same playful use of prefaces; when the publication is announced in the *Journal littéraire*, it appears with both the name of the translator and a long quotation of his preface:

> *Les Amours d'Ismene & d'Ismenias*, par Mr. de Beauchamps. Paris, Simart, 1729, in 12. On verra d'un coup d'oeil le But et la Méthode de l'Auteur, dans ce peu de Paroles de son Epitre Dédicatoire à Madame L.C.D.F. B. "Souvenez-vous, s'il vous plaît, que vous ne m'avez point assujéti à la seche exactitude d'une traduction litterale [...] de me faire un crime de leze-antiquité de ne point trouver dans mes *Amours d'Ismine & d'Ismenias* celles d'Eusthathe". Ce même roman avoit été traduit autrefois par Jean Louveau, & par Jerome de Laval. Ainsi, ceux qui seront curieux de voir en quoi consistent les Changemens, les Additions, les Retranchemens, & peut-être même les Fautes de Mr. de Beauchamps, seront d'autant mieux de recourir à l'une ou l'autre de ces Traductions; qu'il se pourroit très bien qu'elles fussent les uniques Originaux de la sienne.[61]

It is clear that the aim and method are interesting not only for the author–translator (who elaborates on them in his preface), but also for the potential reader (to whom the announcement is addressed). The curious reader is encouraged to compare the changes to previous translations, namely those made by Louveau (1559) and Laval (1582); perhaps he might even find

[60] Compare the apparent deception even of modern scholars, who seem to believe that Beauchamps's translations were also (modern) novels presented with the prefatory topos rather than actual translations/adaptations. Thus we read in Herman and Angelet, *Recueil de préfaces de romans*, 136, about Beauchamps: 'Romancier, il est l'auteur de récits présentés comme des traductions du grec (*Les amours d'Ismène et d'Isménias*, 1729; *Traduction du roman grec de Théodore Prodromus*, 1746) ou du persan (*Histoire du prince Apprius*, 1728)'. And yet, they leave out the one novel by Beauchamps that is new but presented as a translation from the Greek: *Hipparchia, histoire galante* (ca. 1748). Posing as a translation, it is clearly a satire of the contemporary milieu in Paris; see R. L. Dawson, *Additions to the Bibliographies of French Prose Fiction 1618–1806* (Oxford, 1985), 69–71. The novel has been attributed to Jérôme Richard, but Beauchamps seems a more probable author; see Nilsson, 'In Response to Charming Passions'. On the topos as such, considered from a number of different angles, see J. Herman and F. Hallyn, eds, *Le topos du manuscrit trouvé. Hommages à Christian Angelet* (Leuven, 1999).

[61] *Journal littéraire* (1929), 471–2.

mistakes made by Beauchamps, who seems to be accused, in the last sentence, of having translated not the original text but one of the previous translations.[62]

The announcement in *Journal littéraire* indicates that *Hysmine and Hysminias* was known and read in eighteenth-century Paris even before the new translation appeared. It also shows that the intimate reading situation implied in Beauchamps's preface – juxtaposing the female addressee *Madame* with the learned men, *les Sçavants* – is a prefatory topos, playfully used, rather than a sincere remark.[63] There were certainly women who read novels, both ancient and modern, and some of them indeed entertained authors and encouraged translations. But these activities presupposed a certain degree of learning, also in middle-class circles. The salons of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries made up a space where women could take part in the cultural, intellectual and political sphere.[64] It was also a space where men and women met, partly on the same terms, which opened up a novelistic playfulness of the kind that Beauchamps presents in his preface.

Regardless of the quality of Beauchamps's translation, it became very successful. It appeared in no fewer than twelve editions between 1729 and 1797,[65] and as we shall see it most probably contributed to the popularity of the novel until the end of the century.

Hysmine and Hysminias as Libertine Lovers

The next time our Byzantine couple appear is in a rather unexpected context, namely a libertine philosophical treatise by Julien Offray de La Mettrie (1709–1751). La Mettrie is known above all as the author of *L'Homme*

[62] Compare above, note 50, on Beauchamps's language skills. It was not at all uncommon to adapt previous translations rather than translating the original; this happened also to Beauchamps's translation, see for example note 65 below.

[63] Compare C. Angelet, 'Le topos du manuscrit trouvé: considérations historiques et typologiques', in Herman and Hallyn, eds, *Le topos du manuscrit trouvé*, xxxi–liv, li–liii on parodic and ironic aspects of the topos.

[64] On salons, see above, note 44. On women and salon culture, see for example V. von der Heyden-Rynsch, *Salons européens. Les beaux moments d'une culture féminine disparue* (Paris, 1993), and J. de Viguerie, *Filles des Lumières. Femmes et sociétés d'esprit à Paris au XVIIIe siècle* (Bouère, 2007). Compare also Lilti, *Le monde des salons*, 115–21.

[65] Dubost, 'Godard de Beauchamps', 1035, n. 2. There were also translations into other languages, for example the English *Ismene and Ismenias, a novel translated from the French by L. H. Le Moine* (London, 1788), and a Russian translation, on which see S. V. Polyakova, *Evmafij Makrembolit. Povest' ob Isminii i Ismine* (St Petersburg, 2008), 100–101.

machine (*Machine Man*), a provocative rejection of the dualism of body and mind.[66] As a physician and philosopher, he was part of the mid-eighteenth-century intellectual scene dominated by Voltaire, where the works of Montesquieu, Rousseau and Diderot were beginning to be published and the *Encyclopédie* project was getting under way.[67] La Mettrie's philosophy combined materialism with hedonism, and he was thus interested in all bodily functions, including physical pleasure. He explored this theme in *L'Art de jouïr*, an apology for sexual pleasure published in 1751 (in 'Cythère' – that is, Berlin), but in fact a reworking of *La Volupté*, published in 1745 and reprinted in 1746 and 1747 as *L'École de la volupté* ('dans l'isle de Calypso, aux dépens des Nymphes').[68]

Here we must focus on the last version, published as *L'Art de jouïr* (1751), because it is only here that Hysmine and Hysminias appear.[69] The treatise begins by invoking pleasure ('Plaisir, maître souverain des hommes et des dieux, devant qui tout disparaît, jusqu'à la raison même, tu sais combien mon coeur t'adore, et tous les sacrifices qu'il t'a faits', p. 3) and asking 'la froide Philosophie' (classical philosophy?) to be quiet – the 'tendres, naïfs ou sublimes interprètes de la volupté' shall now inspire the author:

> Oui, vous seuls pouvez m'inspirer, enfants gâtés de la Nature et de l'Amour, vous que ce Dieu a pris soin de former lui-même, pour servir à des projets dignes de lui, je veux dire, au bonheur du genre humain; échauffez-moi de votre génie, ouvrez-moi le sanctuaire de la Nature éclairé par l'amour; nouveau, mais plus heureux Prométhée, que j'y puise ce feu sacré de la volupté, qui dans mon coeur, comme dans son temple, ne s'éteigne jamais; et qu'Épicure enfin paraisse ici, tel qu'il est dans tous les coeurs. Ô Nature, ô Amour, puissé-je faire passer dans l'éloge de vos charmes tous les transports avec lesquels je sens vos bienfaits! (p. 5)

After praising the authors whose works have inspired him, the author moves on to three primary examples of delicate, refined and – above all – natural

[66] For a thorough introduction to La Mettrie, his life, work and philosophy, see A. Thomson, *Materialism and Society in the Mid-eighteenth Century: La Mettrie's Discours préliminaires* (Geneva, 1981), 5–77.

[67] On the intellectual background of La Mettrie, see Thomson, *Materialism and Society*, 59–77.

[68] Thomson, *Materialism and Society*, 57–8.

[69] The versions are, in fact, rather different, even though some elements remain the same. I am not familiar with any literary comparison of the different versions. On the earlier version, see Thomson, *Materialism and Society*, 70.

pleasure: Phylis,[70] Daphnis and Chloe, and Hysmine and Hysminias.[71] The stories are somewhat impressionistically represented, with the author talking both to and in the voices of the characters – as if he were watching a painting (or a scene) rather than reading a novel. Hysminias is thus introduced in the following manner:

> Que vois-je! C'est Isménias, qui est sur le point d'enlever l'objet de ses désirs. Son bonheur est peint dans ses yeux, il éclate sur sa figure; et du fond de son coeur, par une sorte de circulation nouvelle, il paraît répandu sur tout son être. Il parle d'Ismène, écoutons. Qu'il a l'air content et ravi!
>
> Enfin, dit-il, je vais donc posséder celle que mon coeur adore! Je vais jouir du fruit de la plus belle victoire. Dieux! que cette conquête m'a coûté! Mais qui soumet un coeur tel que celui d'Ismène a conquis l'Univers. (p. 8)

The focus is not on the development of the plot, but on some significant elements: the separation and the pain it entails ('Si les plaisirs augmentent par les peines, que j'envie votre sort, Isménias!', 9), along with the suspended physical pleasure and the erotic negotiations of the lovers:

> Ce que je vous refuse en plaisirs, vous l'aurez en sentiments. Il n'y a pas dans toute mon âme un seul mouvement qui ne m'approche de vous, un seul soupir qui ne tende vers les lieux où le destin vous appelle. Ne sentez-vous donc point, Isménias, le prix de tant d'amour, le prix d'un coeur qui sait aimer, dans ces moments où les autres femmes ne savent que jouir?
>
> L'amour est éloquent; Isménias aurait pu déployer toute sa rhétorique; il aurait pu vanter son expérience, son adresse, persuader, peut-être convaincre [...] (pp. 10–11)

Crucial themes of the basic story of the Byzantine novel have thus been sustained and augmented with the use of the author's imagination (important companion of sexual pleasures, according to his own definition). His attention

[70] Probably Phyllis, mythological character and shepherdess in *L'Astrée*.

[71] Compare the structure in the first version, discussed briefly by Thomson, *Materialism and Society*, 70. *Daphnis and Chloe* are found in the first version, see for example: 'La nature vous en offrira par-tout l'image; elle est attentive au bien-être de ceux qui la servent. Deux animaux s'accoupleront en votre présence; vous verrez des oiseaux se caresser sur une branche d'arbre; tout vous era de l'amour une leçon vivante' (34; compare with 7).

to detail brings us some significant reminders of the original text, such as the emphasis on Eros and his empire:

> Le plaisir appelle Ismène, il lui tend les bras, il lui montre une chaîne de fleurs. Refusera-t-elle un Dieu jeune, aimable, qui ne veut que sa félicité? C'en est fait; "le conseil en est pris, quand l'Amour l'a donné". (p. 10)

Eros the emperor of the Byzantine novel – sitting on a throne surrounded by his subjects, clearly reminiscent of the Byzantine emperor himself[72] – thus takes on the double meaning of the Greek *eros* and becomes both *Plaisir* and *Amour*. Such a device may indicate that La Mettrie had read the Greek version of *Hysmine and Hysminias* (or a translation closer to the original text than that of Beauchamps), even if the translation of Beauchamps certainly was in circulation by the mid-eighteenth century (with new editions in 1743 and 1748). The sophisticated use of motifs also supports the idea that *L'Art de jouïr* was intended (at least partly) as a literary work. La Mettrie was interested in poetry and belles-lettres, and the abundance of references to both ancient and contemporary authors in all versions of *L'Art de jouïr* may be seen in relation to his desire to become part of the literary scene, demonstrated also in his *Essais sur l'esprit et les beaux-esprits* (1742).[73] It is clearly a literary work, composed in the libertine vein, and this is most probably the reason for the inclusion of Hysmine and Hysminias.

As we have already seen, Makrembolites' novel was well established by the mid-eighteenth century when La Mettrie was working, and it presents a highly emotional story, potentially allegorical and pregnant with rhetoric – all things that the libertine novelists appreciated and enhanced in their own works.[74] *Hysmine and Hysminias* also contains descriptions of physical love, more explicitly represented than in other Greek novels. The characters may

[72] On the imperial imagery of Eros in *Hysmine and Hysminais*, see C. Cupane, '*Eros basileus*. La figura di Eros nel romanzo bizantino d'amore', *Atti dell' Accademia di Scienze, Lettere e Arte di Palermo*, série 4, 33/2 (1974), 243–97, and P. Magdalino, 'Eros the King and the King of Amours: Some Observations on *Hysmine and Hysminias*', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 46 (1992), 197–204.

[73] Thomson, *Materialism and Society*, 69–70. On La Mettrie's treatise in the context of Libertine novels, see Wald Lasowski, *Romanciers libertins du XVIIIe siècle*, xxii.

[74] For a recent study of the libertine novel, see P. Wald Lasowski, *Le grand dérèglement. Le roman libertin du XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 2008). On the issue of rhetoric and style, see also Wald Lasowski, *Romanciers libertins du XVIIIe siècle*, xxxix, and M. A. Bernier, *Libertinage et figures du savoir: rhétorique et roman libertin dans la France des Lumières, 1734–1751* (Paris, 2001).

accordingly be seen as embodiments of pleasure and emotion, and then especially Hysmine, a woman who takes the first initiative and in this manner may be seen as particularly 'natural' and erotic. We shall return to these ideas in the concluding discussion, but let us now turn to yet another representation of *Hysmine and Hysminias*, staged some ten years after the appearance of La Mettrie's treatise.

Hysmine and Hysminias as a tragic opera

In July 1763, *Mercure de France* published the following notice:

> On a donné dans la Salle du Château de Choisy, divers Spectacles, en présence de Leurs Majestés. Le premier (le 13 Juin) étoit *Ismene & Isménias* ou *la Fête de Jupiter*, Opéra en trois Actes, composé exprès pour servir au Divertissemens de la Cour. Le sujet de cet Opéra est tiré des Amours d'*Ismene & d'Ismenias*. Ce qu'on a emprunté de ce Roman, se réduit à l'époque de la Fête de *Jupiter* célébrée par les Peuples d'*Euricome*.[75]

After a rather long description of the story, a list of characters and actors, and an analysis with numerous quotations, some remarks on the author and the composer were presented:

> Le poëme est du Sr *Laujon*, Secrétaire des Commandemens de S.A.S. Mgr le Compte de Clermont. Nous prions cet Auteur de pardonner à la nécessité de nous restreindre, le tort que nous lui faisons en supprimant beaucoup de détails heureux, répandus dans cet Ouvrage & qui soutiennent avantageusement la réputation qu'il s'est déjà acquise dans ce genre. La musique est d'un Anonyme, qui avoit prouvé déjà par d'autres Ouvrages qu'il est possible d'atteindre à des succès flateurs dans un Art qu'on n'exerce que par goût & pour son amusement.[76]

The author of the libretto was Pierre Laujon (1727–1811), who had been active as a playwright in various genres since the 1740s. When he wrote *Ismène et Isménias, ou la Fête de Jupiter* he was accordingly well established.[77]

[75] *Mercure de France, dédié au roi. Juillet 1763. Premier volume* (Paris, 1763), 165–78, esp. 165.

[76] *Mercure de France*, 177–8.

[77] For a list of Laujon's works, see the césar (calendrier élecronique des spectacles sous l'ancien régime et sous la révolution) website, at http://www.cesar.org.uk/cesar2/people/

The composer of the score, here referred to as *Anonyme*, was Jean-Benjamin de La Borde (1734–1794), known as a historian and composer but also as a favourite of Louis XV and thus a privileged man of some power.[78] In spite of being referred to as anonymous in *Mercure de France*,[79] De La Borde was indeed known as a composer at the time of the first performance. In the diary of Denis Pierre Jean Papillon de La Ferté (1727–1794), administrator of the *Menus-Plaisirs du Roi*,[80] both author and composer are named: 'La représentation d'*Ismène et Isménias*, musique de M. de La Borde, premier valet de chambre du Roi, paroles de M. Laujon, secrétaire des commandements de Mr le compte de Clermont, a eu lieu le lundi soir'.[81] Then follows some

people.php?fct=edit&person_UOID=100228 (last accessed 7 October 2014). For some serious doubt of the talents of Laujon, see S. Bouissou, *Jean-Philippe Rameau, Les Boréades, ou la tragédie oubliée* (Paris, 1992), 81.

[78] For De La Borde's biography and his writings on music, see M. Fend, 'La Borde, Jean-Benjamin de', *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*, at http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/15760 (last accessed 7 October 2014). For a recent study, see M. Couty, *Jean-Benjamin de Laborde ou Le bonheur d'être fermier-général* (Paris, 2001). According to Bouissou, *Jean-Philippe Rameau*, 69, De La Borde was also the *favorit* of Mme de Pompadour, which contributed to his (undeserved) success.

[79] This was perhaps a way of saying that he was an amateur; cf. *Correspondance littéraire, philosophique et critique par Grimm, Diderot, Raynal, Meister etc.: revue sur les textes originaux comprenant outre ce qui a été publié à diverses époques les fragments supprimés en 1813 par la censure, les parties inédites conservées à la bibliothèque ducale de Gotha et à l'Arsenal à Paris* (Paris, 1870–1882), vol. 9 (1879), 237: 'Il a été musiqué par M. de La Borde, premier valet de chambre du roi, amateur et garde-magasin de doubles-croches suivant la cour'.

[80] The *Menus-Plaisirs du Roi* was the organisation of the royal household (*Maison du Roi*) responsible for the design and presentation of *fêtes* and ceremonies at the court of France; also music and ballet was part of the responsibilities. The particular occasion for the performance of *Ismène et Isménias* on 13 June 1763 (along with two other operas, see Bouissou, *Jean-Philippe Rameau*, 59) was a royal celebration of Peace (Les Fêtes de la Paix, to celebrate the end of the Seven Years' War), for which the composition was commissioned. In order to secure the most appreciated actors and singers for the fête at Choisy, the king demanded that no performances should be given in Paris on that day; see the letter cited in Bouissou, *Jean-Philippe Rameau*, 64.

[81] *Journal de Papillon de La Ferté, intendant et contrôleur de l'argenterie, menus-plaisirs et affaires de la chambre du roi (1756–1780): l'administration des menus. Publ. avec une introd. et des notes par Ernest Boysse* (Paris, 1887), 120–23 (18 June) on the repetitions (11 June) and performance of *Ismène et Isménias*. From Papillon de La Ferté we also learn that there was supposed to be a second performance of the opera (16 June), now with the entire royal family invited from Versailles; it was, however, cancelled due to illness: 'Je suis retourné, le jeudi matin, à Choisy, pour la seconde représentation d'*Ismène et Isménias*, pour laquelle la famille royale était venue exprès de Versailles; mais j'ai appris, en arrivant, que ce spectacle ne

comments on the reactions of the audience, whose feelings were mixed. We shall return to this shortly, but let us first consider the relation between the opera and the novel.

As we have seen, the notice in *Mercure de France* mentions the novel and what was borrowed from it ('Ce qu'on a emprunté de ce Roman, se réduit à l'époque de la Fête de *Jupiter* célébrée par les Peuples d'*Euricome*'), which indicates that the novel is generally known. Another notice from the same year supports this:

> Le lundi 13 de ce mois on a représenté à Choisy devant leurs Majestés, *Ismène & Isménias ou la fête de Jupiter, Opéra en trois Actes*, imprimé chez Christoffe Ballard rue des Noyers. Les paroles sont de M. Laujon, Secrétaire des Commandemens de S.A.S. M. le Comte de *Clermont*. Le sujet est tiré des Amours d'*Ismène & Isménias*, Roman très connu.[82]

The author then goes on to identify the passage that inspired Laujon ('l'endroit de ce Roman qui a fourni à M. *Laujon* l'heureuse idée de son Poëme'), which – not surprisingly – turns out to be a quotation from the translation by Beauchamps.[83] The same passage is quoted by Laujon himself in his foreword to the libretto in his *Oeuvres choisies*:

> ce qu'on a donc emprunté du roman se réduit à l'extrait suivant: « Jupiter les protège, tous les Dieux les chérissent; par une ancienne coutume, ou par une loi inviolable, ils assemblent, tous les ans, dans le temple de Jupiter, les jeunes garçons de leur Ville qui n'ont point encore aimé; on en choisit au sort parmi eux pour aller annoncer sa fête aux villes voisines: il faut que, maîtres de leurs coeurs, ils reviennent indifférens, comme ils sont partis; si quelqu'un manque à ce devoir essentiel de son emploi, un châtiment sévère attend le prévaricateur à son retour. »[84]

pouvait avoir lieu, la Dme Arnoult s'étant trouvée très mal, le matin, par suite de la mort de son fils'.

[82] *L'anné littéraire*, 1763, vol. 4, Lettre IX (194–216) (Amsterdam, 'et se trouve à Paris, chez [...]').

[83] Only the first sentence differs, apparently in order to make the sense more clear: 'Jupiter protège les Peuples d'Euricome' instead of 'Jupiter les protège'. After the quotation from the novel, 'Isménias chargé d'annoncer la fête de Jupiter est revenu à Euricome. Ecoutons le lui-même'. Then follows quotations from the opera, mixed with summaries of the content.

[84] P. Laujon, *Oeuvres choisies*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1811), 181. Only punctuation and a missing 'plutôt' differs from the translation of Beauchamps (2 in 1743 edition).

Laujon was accordingly inspired by one specific passage in the translation made by Beauchamps, and he also makes some interesting comments on his additions:

> Il n'est point mention, dans le roman, d'Azaris, roi d'Euricome; mais en resserrant l'action dans les bornes de la fête de Jupiter, on a cru devoir donner à Isménias un rival qui le mît dans la nécessité, ou de perdre ce qu'il aime, ou de faire son aveu à Ismène, dans le jour prescrit pour la fête et choisi par le Roi pour son hymen; c'est aussi ce qui a déterminé à substituer au personnage de Cratisthène, ami d'Isménias, celui de Thémistée, comme plus intéressé à veiller sur la gloire de son fils, et plus éclairé sur ses périls; les conseils de la nature sont toujours plus pressans que ceux de l'amitié.[85]

He then adds a final note on his adaptation: 'Enfin l'auteur a cru pouvoir se permettre moins d'exactitude sur les faits, dans un sujet tiré d'un roman, qu'il ne s'en serait permis dans un sujet historique'.[86] This is an interesting remark on the eighteenth-century librettist's relation to fact and fiction: the use of a fictional story apparently opened up for more freedom than if it had been a historical topic. It was not the first time that Laujon was inspired by a Greek novel; one of his first works was the opera (pastorale) *Daphnis et Chloé*.[87] In the preface to his *Oeuvres choisies*, Laujon describes how his father wanted him to become a lawyer; but he would read lyrical authors in secret and especially admired Philippe Quinault (1635–1688), a major figure in the lyrical drama tradition and known especially for his librettos written for Jean-Baptiste Lully's work. Laujon describes his admiration for Quinault in the following way:

> J'admirais cette souplesse harmonieuse que je ne trouvais que dans ses vers; j'avais peine à concevoir qu'un homme eût tiré de son imagination l'art de créer un genre de spectacle qui pût à-la-fois flatter tous les sens, réunir et s'approprier *tous les genres de poésie*, réaliser les fictions de l'épopée, emprunter d'elle l'art de *personnifier les passions*, mettre en *action* ce qu'elle ne peut mettre qu'en *récit*, établir sur le théâtre l'école *de la mythologie*, graver dans l'esprit par l'attrit du plaisir *les illusions de la fable*, faire concourir enfin au succès d'un genre que nous enviait l'Europé entière, nos principaux artistes, poètes, musiciens, chanteurs, acteurs, peintres, décorateurs et machinistes.[88]

[85] Laujon, *Oeuvres choisies*, 181–2.

[86] Laujon, *Oeuvres choisies*, 182.

[87] *Daphnis et Chloé, opéra en quatre actes*, performed at the Académie royale de musique on 28 September 1747 (again in 1752); the first work in vol. 1 of the *Oeuvres choisies*, 1–70.

[88] Laujon, *Oeuvres choisies*, xv–xvi (italics in the original).

What Laujon admired, and then aspired to himself, was accordingly the possibility of transforming poetry into a stage performance – to represent and personify passions. Since he happened to be in love at the time, he came to think of the novel *Daphnis and Chloe*, whose hero reminded him of himself, and he set about transforming it into an opera representing his own passions: 'C'est moi que je faisais parler dans *Daphnis*; c'est elle que je peignais dans *Chloé*; et comme mon coeur était mon guide, jamais ouvrage ne m'a moins coûté'.[89]

This may sound as a romantic autobiographical detail, explaining the prominent place of *Daphnis et Chloé* in the *Ouvres choisie*s but having little to do with Laujon's adaptations of novels for the opera. However, I think we have here one of the keys to understanding the attraction of the Greek novel for the eighteenth-century stage: the representation of emotions, the elaborate description of passions. The changes that Laujon has made to the original story of *Hysmine and Hysminia*s all aim at representing as much emotion as possible within the frame of a restricted action, the power of love yet remaining the *primus motor* of the plot. *L'Amour* does not appear personified until the end of the opera (act 3, scene 4), but then in a scene filled with emotion as he finally unites the loving couple ('Vous avez trop connu ses peines / Connaissez enfin ses plaisirs!'), and then the final words:

> Vous versiez des larmes,
> Quel moment succède à vos soupirs!
> Du sein des alarmes
> Naissent vos plaisirs.[90]

Pain thus gives birth to pleasure in a manner that is characteristic not only of the eighteenth-century stage but also of the Byzantine novel. The effect of grand emotions and erotic suffering was further enhanced by a *ballet d'action* in the second act, depicting the story of Jason and Medea.[91] Such insertions are sometimes seen simply as a *divertissement* placed in the middle of the opera for the amusement of the audience, but in this case the theme is clearly chosen in order to depict the suffering of the protagonists, facing the risk of losing

[89] Laujon, *Oeuvres choisies*, xviii; the story is told at xvi–xviii. Interestingly, Laujon states that he left out the scenes already used by others; see xviii.

[90] Laujon, *Oeuvres choisies*, 224.

[91] For an analysis of this ballet, see E. Nye, *Mime, Music and Drama on the Eighteenth-century Stage: The ballet d'action* (Cambridge, 2011), 194–203 (the scores are conveniently reprinted in an appendix, 272–304).

each other.[92] Moreover, the *ballet d'action* as an art form was a crucial means of evoking emotional reactions with its particular combination of music and bodily movement.[93] Some spectators thought the ballet was the best part of the entire performance, more or less dismissing the opera itself.[94]

Let us consider some reactions to the performance of this opera, to see how the emotional effect was perceived by the audience. As already mentioned, Papillon de La Ferté added some comments on the opera in his diary, dated 18 June 1763:

> Les avis sur cet ouvrage ont été fort partagés. M. le duc de Choiseul a été, au grand regret de M. le duc de Duras, pour la negative. Au reste, cet ouvrage m'a paru trop chargé de musique et sans un grand intéret. Les ballets ont été trouvés bons, entre autres celui qui peignait la malheureuse catastrophe de Jason et de Médée.[95]

We can see examples of these mixed opinions in other sources too. The *Mercure de France* says that the music was 'remplie de choses sçavantes & agréables', while the ballet of the second act is described as 'Pantomime du grand genre, de la plus belle composition & peint avec toute la vérité & l'énergie don't l'art est capable'.[96] The music is indeed rather conventional, but the composition

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[92] See e.g. *Revue de Paris, journal critique, politique et littéraire*, vol. 30 (1836): *L'académie royale de musique, seconde époque (l'académie de danse établie par Louis XIV en 1661)*, 228–52, 238 by Castil-Blaze: 'Le 10 décembre 1770, on représente Ismène et Isménias, de Laujon et Laborde; plusieurs scènes de Médée et Jason, ballet pantomime, sont intercalées dans cette tragédie lyrique. Cet intermède, que l'on peut regarder comme une imitation de celui d'Hamlet, devait faire connaître à Ismène tous les malheurs que l'amour peut causer'.

[93] See Nye, *Mime, Music and Drama*. The movements and gestures of the actors and dancers are indicated in the scores, sometimes describing also the feelings of the characters (for example, 'elle menace [...] Creuse est effrayée des menaces').

[94] For citations, see below. Compare some modern scholars who seem to have adapted the same view, for example Bouissou, *Jean-Philippe Rameau*, 59, n. 8: 'Le point le plus original d'*Ismène et Isménias* consiste dans le ballet pantomime de «Medée et Jasson», véritable ballet d'action qui correspond environ à un sixième de l'oeuvre'. In fact, the ballet was not original at all, but rather an adaptation of scores by Jean Joseph Rodolphe (1730–1812) from a 1763 production in Stuttgart. It seems that the famous dancer Gaëtan Vestris (who performed both in Stuttgart and in Paris) brought the scores to Paris so that De La Borde could shorten and adapt it. See Nye, *Mime, Music and Drama*, 194–5 with references.

[95] *Journal de Papillon de La Ferté*, 121.

[96] *Mercure de France*, 165–78, esp. 178.

is competent from a technical point of view.[97] As for the plot of the opera, the author of an article in *L'anné littéraire* was delighted and argued that the libretto could even be read on its own merits:

> Cet opéra, Monsieur, a beaucoup réussi. Il plaît même à la lecture, privés des secours du chant & de la dans, qui souvent sont le principal mérite de ces sortes d'ouvrages. Il y a dans celui-ci de l'imagination, de l'esprit, du sentiment, de la délicatesse; le plan en est simple, naturel, bien conçu, bien développé; l'action est intéressante; & il y a des momens, tels que celui du dernier Acte, où l'ame est déchirée; la situation d'*Isménias* est neuve & vraiment tragique.[98]

We note here a number of aspects that are characteristic not only of a good *tragédie lyrique*, but also of a successful novel: imagination and sentiment, simplicity and credibility, development and innovation. These similarities indicate the reason why Greek novels such as *Daphnis and Chloe* and *Hysmine and Hysminias* lent themselves so easily to the form of opera, especially in the condensed form composed by Laujon.

When the opera was performed again in 1770 (on 11 December at the Académie royale de Musique) it met with less sympathy, but the ballet was still appreciated. 'Je conviens que je n'ai rien compris au poème de M. de Laujon, et que je n'ai nulle envie d'y rien comprendre', we read in the *Correspondance littéraire, philosophique et critique*.[99] The writer sees the ballet of Jason and Medea, danced by Gaëtan Vestris, as its only merit.[100] But people did come, he admits, and some liked it while other ridiculed the performance: 'Malgré

[97] I would like to thank Lars Berglund for taking a look at the score from a musicologist's perspective and discussing it with me.

[98] *L'année littéraire*, 1763, vol. 4, Lettre IX, 194–216, esp. 211.

[99] *Correspondance littéraire, philosophique et critique par Grimm, Diderot, Raynal, Meister etc.*, 237.

[100] See *Correspondance littéraire, philosophique et critique*, 237, for a long consideration of the art of dancing and ballet. Compare Bachaumont, *Mémoires secrets* (1770): 'Le poëme, du sieur Laujon, est dénué de tout intérêt, fort embarrassé dans sa marche, et prête peu à l'appareil du spectacle que doit fournir un ouvrage de ce genre. La musique, du sieur La Borde, est excellente comme production d'un amateur, mais n'a pas de même cette chaleur qu'on admire et qu'on ressent dans les compositions des grands maîtres. Elle est triste, presque toujours dans le bas, peu d'airs chantans ou de symphonie; quelques morceaux assez agréables, mais plus propres pour la Comédie Italienne, et qui, par leur disparate avec l'ensemble, font une dissonance qui révolte les moins connaisseurs'. On this curious publication in context, see J. D. Popkin and B. Fort, eds, *The* Mémoires secrets *and the Culture of Publicity in Eighteenth-century France* (Oxford, 1998), esp. J. D. Popkin, 'The *Mémoires secrets* and the reading of the Englightenment', 9–35.

cela, la nouveauté du spectacle l'a fait réussir et a attiré beaucoup de monde à l'Opéra. Les uns ont dit que c'était beau, les autres que les contorsions de Vestris-Jason étaient ridicules, et celles de Medée-Allard effroyables'.[101] A caricature printed in London in 1781, representing Vestris dancing as Jason, seems to express a similar view.[102] The weekly *L'Avantcoureur* had a different and more benevolent review, underlining the successful performance of the actors–singers and dancers:

> Ces rôles ont été trouvés parfaitement remplis. On a beaucoup applaudi les Balets qui font de la composition la plus ingénieuse. Le Balet de Médée & Jason est dans le genre héroique & dramatique, il est supérieurement dansé par M. Vestris, Mlle Allard & Mlle Guimard.[103]

Regardless of the feelings of the audience, we may note that the critics were familiar with the novelistic background of the opera: 'On donna le 11 décembre dernier, sur le théâtre de l'Opéra, la première représentation d'Ismène et Isménias, tragédie lyrique en trois actes, tirée en partie du roman grec de ce nom, par M. de Laujon'.[104] Since the translation by Beauchamps was still being reprinted, it is not very strange that it was generally known in Paris. And it seems to have presented a story that moved the audience, in one direction or the other.

Translating a Byzantine Story

So how shall we understand the strong presence of *Hysmine and Hysminias* in eighteenth-century France? Is it just one of many good stories, picked up from the rich mine of ancient tales and used for the amusement of novel readers? Or does it contain something that was seen as particularly attractive for the eighteenth-century audience?

[101] *Correspondance littéraire, philosophique et critique*, 238.

[102] 'Gaëtan Vestris dans le rôle de Jason dans Médée et Jason (1767)', published 3 July 1781 by John Boydell, London. Compare the notice cited above, which continues: 'Un faiseur de calembours a fait une petite estampes où l'on voit M. de La Borde, avec son opéra d'Isménias, dégringoler d'une échelle et tomber sur un manche à balet qui le reçoit et le soutient debout. Cela veut dire que, sans le ballet de Médée, l'opéra de M. de La Borde serait tombé'.

[103] *L'Avant-coureur, feuille hebdomadaire, où sont annoncés les objets particuliers des Sciences, de la Littérature, des Arts, des Métiers, de l'Industrie, des Spectacles, & les Nouveautés en tout genre* (Paris, 1770), 811–12.

[104] *Correspondance littéraire, philosophique et critique*, 237.

If we begin by considering the translation by Beauchamps, it is obvious that the Greek novel attributed to 'Eustathios' had many characteristics that would appeal to both novelistic and libertine circles: the rhetorical and 'sophistic' style, the enigmatic allegories, and the potential (sometimes overt) eroticism. In Beauchamps's version, it was turned into a shorter novel with a more coherent storyline, less descriptive and yet more 'Greek', still with strong allegorical, emotional and erotic implications. Even if eroticism is something that we have come to associate with the libertine milieu, I would argue that the *emotional* element is the key word here, rather than the erotic one as such. If we move on to La Mettrie and his use of Hysmine and Hysminias as the ideal couple, it is not their physical love that primarily moves the philosopher, but the emotional quality that accompanies it. Of course, Hysmine is a woman whose actions appeal to the libertine mind: she takes the first step and flirts with Hysminias, which means that she is a free spirit who follows her emotional (and physical) impulses.[105] At the same time, Hysminias follows the pattern of the typical libertine hero: he is gradually initiated into the mysteries of love, until he himself has the knowledge to become the teacher.[106] The appearance of the Byzantine couple in the writings of both Beauchamps and La Mettrie may accordingly be understood from the libertine perspective, in the sense that the story found in *Hysmine and Hysminias* seemed to adhere to what was thought of as 'ideal love' from an emotional and erotic point of view.

Turning to the opera, it is again the emotional potential of the story that makes it appropriate for the stage. The opera, and the *tragédie lyrique* in particular, was supposed to stir strong emotions in the audience with its combination of story, acting and music. This effect could be further enhanced, as in this case, by the inclusion of a *ballet d'action*.[107] At the same time, the opera was a place that opened for licentious meetings in the loges, thus a space of some importance for libertine circles. Novelistic stories easily lent themselves to adaptations for the stage, since they aimed at the same emotional

[105] Compare P. Cryle, 'Codified Indulgence: The Niceties of Libertine Ethics in Casanova and His Contemporaries', in P. Cryle and L. O'Connell, eds, *Libertine Enlightenment: Sex, Liberty and Licence in the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 2004), 48–60, esp. 51–2.

[106] See Wald Lasowski, *Romanciers libertins du XVIIIe siècle*, xlvii.

[107] Note also the bodily aspects of the *ballet d'action*, which mirror a contemporary interest in bodily expressions, apparent also in the libertine novel and in philosophical materialism; see Nye, *Mime, Music and Drama*, 9–10, and, in a wider context, A. Gooden, ed., *The Eighteenth-Century Body* (Oxford, 2002).

affect.[108] This becomes very clear if we return to the passage in the *Encyclopédie* describing the novel. De Jaucourt discusses the utility of the novel, and states, 'D'ailleurs on aime les romans sans s'en douter, à cause des passions qu'ils peignent, & de l'émotion qu'ils excitent. On peut par conséquent tourner avec fruit cette émotion & ces passions'.[109] One could say the same things about the opera: it paints passions and stirs emotions, so that the audience may process these feelings in a fruitful manner. And in the case of *La Fête de Jupiter* it seems to have worked, because the opera by Laujon did indeed induce strong feelings.

Each of the three writers examined here adapted *Hysmine and Hysminias* in their own manner and for their own purposes. Beauchamps and Laujon both commented upon their aim and method in their prefaces, while La Mettrie had the text itself express the appropriateness of the exemplary lovers. It may be tempting to assume that the libertines in particular would use a Byzantine novel rather than an ancient love story as a statement against the classical tradition; that there would be some sort of 'Byzantinism' involved in the choice of ideal lovers, especially in the case of La Mettrie, who questioned classical philosophy. This brings us back to one of the questions asked at the beginning of this chapter: were the Byzantine novels considered less valuable than the ancient novels in the eighteenth century? The answer to that question is clearly no. As we have seen, no distinction was made between ancient and Byzantine novels, even if there certainly was an awareness of the chronological differences – they were all seen as 'romans grecs', based on their form and content. There is accordingly no reason to believe that La Mettrie preferred Hysmine and Hysminias because of their Byzantine background, but rather because they embodied the emotional eroticism he wanted to describe. We may recall that one of his other ideal couples was Daphnis and Chloe, characters from a novel that Huet had associated with that of 'Eustathios' a century earlier, defining them both as 'sophistic' (that is, rhetorical and emotional).[110] And as we have seen, *Daphnis and Chloe* was also the first novel that Laujon turned into a highly personal, erotic and emotional opera.

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[108] In this way, the arguments previously used *against* the novels (*le danger du roman*, because they provoked strong and possibly illicit feelings) made them useful for the stage (where emotional reactions were sought).

[109] S.v. *roman* (14:341) in *Encyclopédie*, eds Diderot and Le Rond D'Alembert, University of Chicago: ARTFL Encyclopédie Project, Morrissey, ed., at http://encyclopedie.uchicago.edu/ (last accessed 7 October 2014).

[110] See above, p. 180. On Huet and his dating and understanding of Longus, compare Reeve, 'The Re-emergence of Ancient Novels', 294–5.

It has sometimes been assumed that Byzantine literature had no place in the European tradition before it was 'discovered' in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[111] I hope to have shown here that such an assumption is wrong and that secular literature from Byzantium indeed was present in Europe, though sometimes in forms different from what we might expect. We have seen how a Byzantine novel was transmitted, read, translated and used by novelists, philosophers and musicians in eighteenth-century France. It gained popularity not because it was a Byzantine novel, but because it seems to have appealed to the eighteenth-century concerns with reason, sentiment and body, often expressed by writers and artists who wished to question conventions on intellectual, cultural and artistic levels. My case study indicates that further investigation of other texts could yield some interesting results. Moreover, it shows that the nineteenth-century image of the Byzantine novel as a deprived and despised genre is not representative of the entire Western tradition. When Philippe Lebas wrote his introduction to a new translation of *Hysmine and Hysminias* in 1828 – beginning with the defensive 'Il est rare qu'un traducteur ne fasse pas l'éloge de l'auteur qu'il traduit', he represents, on the contrary, a new turn – the modern tradition according to which imitation is bad, and Byzantine imitation in particular.[112] As one of the representatives of that line of thinking, Lebas confiscated a long history of literary appreciation and influence, the history of a novel that in the previous century had been a huge success. This chapter has been an attempt to reconstruct that confiscated history as one small piece of a much larger puzzle.[113]

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[111] See for example B. Baldwin, *Timarion. Translated with Introduction and Commentary* (Detroit, MI, 1984), 6: 'But up to Gibbon's time Byzantine texts were either theological, a genre for which he did not care, or historical ones [...] which he read for facts rather than aesthetic pleasure. It is only since the nineteenth century that the riches of Byzantine secular literature began to be found, printed and savoured'.

[112] See especially xiv: 'non content de leur emprunter des expressions qu'il dénature, il leur vole aussi des situations; mais, semblables aux Harpies, il souille tout ce qu'il touche, et l'imitation devient chez lui une parodie, ou plutôt une caricature. J'ai indiqué dans les notes quelques uns de ces plagiats'. On Byzantine imitation and the European tradition, see I. Nilsson, 'The Same Story but Another: A Reappraisal of Literary Imitation in Byzantium', in E. Schiffer and A. Rhoby, eds, *Imitatio – Aemulatio – Variatio* (Vienna, 2010), 195–208, esp. 196–8.

[113] An abridged version of this article is published as 'Du roman byzantin à la tragédie lyrique. *Hysminé et Hysminias* en français au XVIII[e] siècle', in B. Pouderon, ed., *Les romans grecs et latins et leurs réécritures modernes. Études sur la réception de l'ancien roman, du Moyen Âge à la fin du XIXe siècle* (Paris, 2015), 221–45.

Chapter 10

The Adoption of Byzantine Motifs in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Czech and Moravian Historical Novel Production[1]

Lubomíra Havlíková[2]

Literary adaptations of historical subjects have a long tradition in Czech and Moravian prose literature. Since the late nineteenth century, historical prose in the Czech lands systematically developed in close association with Romanticism. The development of historical prose was closely connected with the Czech National Revival, with the era of the great Czech, Moravian and Slovak historians Pavel Josef Šafařík and František Palacký, and with their historiographical works on Czech and Moravian history. It was motivated by an endeavour to make historiography an instrument of broad scope and impact. The generation of novelists at the end of the nineteenth century had abandoned Walter Scott's Romanticism and were focused on presenting the most plausible possible image of the past, based on knowledge of historical material and on a systematic study of archive documentation. The *fin-de-siècle* nineteenth-century generation had been inspired by world history and had pursued universal humanitarian ideals. In contrast, the realists, under the influence of the crisis in political and social life at the end of the nineteenth century, identified with the demands of realism, seeking subjects and an

[1] Prof. Dr. hab. P. Marciniak quotes data on Slovak and Czech literature based on the original manuscript of this article in his book entitled *Ikona dekadencji. Wybrane problemy europejskiej recepcji Bizancjum od XVII do XX wieku* [*The Icon of Decadence: Selected Problems of the European Reception of Byzantium Between the Seventeenth and Twentieth Centuries*] (Katowice, 2009), 18–19 and 86–7.

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answer to the question of the meaning of history in national consciousness and material. Paradoxically, their endeavours provoked a wave of resistance to historicism, which was associated with conservatism and nationalism. The authors of historical novels sought democratic ideals and a connection between the past and the present within the complex social situation, laying stress on the ethical value of the individual and taking into account the popular national roots at the heart of society.

Byzantium as a subject for a historical novel, and the issue of whether or not modern authors were to use subjects from the history of the Byzantine Empire in their original Czech literary output, is a new and previously unexplored topic. While classical Antiquity has quite frequently been a subject for works of Czech and Moravian prose and poetry, the subject of 'Byzantium' has long been a very remote and obscure matter of indifference to prose writers and historians, lying somewhere between 'Antiquity' and 'the Middle Ages', and thus difficult to treat effectively or coherently. Apart from one novel at the beginning of the twenty-first century,[3] the subject of Byzantium has not been directly drawn upon in Czech and Moravian literature. For 'Byzantium' to work effectively as a topic in Czech literature, it had to be rendered familiar to the Czech readers and directly linked to the Czech and Moravian social and geographical environment. Points of contact (geographical locations and periods of time) had to be found where Byzantine history interacted with the history of the Czech lands. Interest in Byzantine history, its adaptation and its interlinking with historical development in the Czech lands was reflected in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Czech and Moravian literature[4] in two subject areas and chronological periods: firstly, Byzantium and Great Moravia of the ninth century; and secondly the crusades of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

The first group of works includes both those reflecting Byzantine history itself and those that draw upon material involving Byzantine–Slavonic

[3] J. Cimický, *Tzimiskis* (Prague, 2005).

[4] In the nineteenth-century literary environment, the Byzantine mission to Christianize Moravia particularly inspired the Revival generation in Slovakia. The history of Great Moravia and such famous figures as Svatopluk, Cyril and Methodius, as well as Slav culture, were celebrated by Ján Hollý (1785–1849) in his epics *Svätopluk* (1833) and *Cyrilometodiada* (1835); see K. Rosenbaum, 'Hollého epos o Cyrilovi a Metodovi. K otázke cyrilometodejskej tradicie v slovenskom národnom obrodení', in Jozef Butvin et al., eds, *Veľká Morava a naša doba. K 1100. výročiu príchodu Cyrila a Metoda. Sborník štúdií a dokumentov* (Bratislava, 1963), 116–33. The Great Moravian tradition was also honoured by the Štúr-inspired generation, which from 1836 organized national celebrations at Děvín and from 1842 published the *Nitra Almanach*. Both Děvín and Nitra are closely associated with the history of Great Moravia.

political, cultural and religious relations and the history of the Great Moravian Empire (that is, the rule of Rostislav and Svatopluk from the Mojmír dynasty; the Byzantine brothers Constantine-Cyril and Archbishop Methodius from Thessalonike and their Moravian mission; the Christianization and baptizing of the Moravian and Bohemian lands; contacts between the Apostolic See in Rome, represented by Pope Nicholas, and the Constantinopolitan patriarchate, represented by Patriarch Photius; the Cyrillo-Methodian heritage and its development in Bohemia, and so on). Francis Dvornik, born in Moravia, Professor of Church History at Charles University in Prague and then, after the Second World War, Professor of Byzantine History at the Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies of Harvard University, wrote:

> Byzantium moulded the undisciplined tribes of Serbs, Bulgars, Russians, and Croats, and made nations out of them; it gave to them its religion and institutions, taught their princes how to govern, transmitted to them the very principles of civilisation – writing and literature.[5]

We can easily apply the same sentence to the early medieval Kingdom of Moravia.

One historical figure from the Byzantine past is directly reflected in the historical novel *Tzimiskis*,[6] by Jan Cimický (born 1948). In his book, this Czech author of the post-war generation, personally motivated by the coincidence of the similarity of his name to that of the Byzantine Emperor John I Tzimiskes (969–976), seeks out the life-story of this outstanding Byzantine warrior, mapping out Byzantine history within the context of Arab, Bulgarian and Russian history.

The Great Moravian period, which saw the first contacts between the Czech lands and the Byzantine Empire, was the subject for *O Děvín a Velehrad* [*Oh Děvín and Velehrad*][7] written by the famous Czech author of historical novels for children Eduard Štorch (1878–1956), who specialized in prehistoric periods. The subtitle of the book is *Román z dob Velké Moravy* [*Novel from the Period of the Great Moravian Empire*]. Štorch took his inspiration for the title from the specialist work by the archaeologist Innocenc Ladislav Červinka, *Děvín a Velehrad. Dva hrady velkomoravské. Studie topograficko-archeologická*

[5] F. Dvorník, in Foreword by P. Charanis, in F. Dvornik, *Byzantine Missions among the Slavs. SS. Constantine-Cyril and Methodius* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1970), xv.

[6] Cimický, *Tzimiskis*.

[7] E. Štorch, *O Děvín a Velehrad. Román z dob Velké Moravy* (Prague, 1939; Brno, 1992; Prague, 2000).

[*Děvín and Velehrad, Two Great Moravian Castles: A Topographic-Archaeological Study*].[8] Eduard Štorch's historical novel endeavoured to portray the struggle between the Byzantine (Greek) East and the Latin West, which raged at the end of the ninth century over the Moravian and Bohemian Slav Church and its orientation (whether looking to Constantinople or to Rome for leadership). As this novel was first published during the occupation of Czechoslovakia at the beginning of the Second World War in 1939, the author was also clearly thinking of the struggle between the Germans and the Slavs as he wrote it. Hence, in the introduction to his book, Štorch quotes from *Svatý Václav* [*Saint Wenceslas*], a book written by the eminent Czech historian of the Middle Ages Josef Pekař:

> The military encounter between the German–Latin West and the Byzantine–Greek East and the struggle over the Czech Slavs in the last quarter of the ninth century undoubtedly took place in one of the most dramatic periods of our history.[9]

The background to the political struggles in Štorch's novel is the fight against paganism and the coming of Christianity, a struggle that takes place at the dawn of Moravian and Bohemian history. In the colourful novel, written in a language that is accessible to children and teenagers, Štorch considered the significance of the emergence of the written Slav language (Old Church Slavonic), which at a certain time became a unifying literary–cultural force for the Slavs and a 'third international language in Europe', alongside Latin and Greek. In this context, he was also interested in the development of the Slavonic liturgy; the emergence of the national church; and the inclusion of the Moravian and Bohemian state among the states of the Christian Oecumene, and described the contribution of the Slavs to the political and cultural growth of the world.

With regard to Byzantine motifs in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Czech and Moravian literature, certain chapters of Štorch's historical novel should be highlighted, as they focus on such real historical figures as the Slav missionaries and European co-patron saints Constantine-Cyril and Methodius and their fortunes in Great Moravia, in addition to the Moravian

[8] I. L. Červinka, *Děvín a Velehrad. Dva hrady velkomoravské. Studie topograficko-archeologická* (Kroměříž, 1902); I. L. Červinka, *Děvín. Velehrad říše Velkomoravské* (Brno, 1914).

[9] From the author's introduction to the first edition in Prague, dated 28 October 1939. Štorch, *O Děvín a Velehrad*, 5.

Prince Rostislav and his nephew Svatopluk, King of Great Moravia. With the fortunes of the main protagonists of ninth-century (Great) Moravian history in the background, the author portrayed the struggle between the Eastern, Byzantine notion of Christianity and its Western, Latin understanding. As this is a historical novel and a work of literature, neither non-fiction nor a historical monograph, the author has the right of every novelist to artistic licence; he does not have to take all the historical facts into account, and he may adapt the historical reality creatively, modifying or partly inventing it. Hence, there are several secondary characters in the novel who are fictional, as well as events and actions that are also imagined.

Compared to Štorch's work, the children's novel by Moravian writer Bohumír Fiala (1915–1979), entitled *V Rasticově městě* [In Rastislav's town],[10] is closer to historical fact, or, to be more precise, the historical facts used are more accurate and not so prone to literary embellishment or transformation. Fiala takes the reader to a region with which he is intimately familiar: the Moravian River Morava and the Dyje basin; to the well-known Moravian ethnographic area named Podluží; and to the area between the towns of Hodonín and Břeclav, the location of some important Moravian archaeological sites (Great Moravian-era settlements such as Valy (gradъ Morava) near Mikulčice; and Pohansko (Lovětingradъ, Lautenburch) near Břeclav in South Moravia in the Czech Republic). The action of the novel takes place on two levels: one contemporary and the other historical. A boy, who is helping out at an archaeological dig during his summer holidays, enters so much into the spirit of the past, contemplating the artefacts that have been unearthed, that he lives life as a ninth-century historical character and at the same time his own life as a temporary assistant at the archaeological dig. The author has him (in the ninth century) fall in love with a beautiful Slav (Moravian) girl named Ledunka; he endures the tribulations of being a slave; and he fights against raiding nomadic tribesmen. This method of retrospection brings the historical reality of the period closer to young readers.

Novels for adults, which hark back to Byzantine–Great Moravian relations, include *Zlatý solid* [*The Gold Solidus*],[11] by the Czech author Pavel Hejcman (born 1927). The plot of this detective story is set in an unspecified location: at the Luhy fortified settlement; those familiar with the archaeological agglomeration at Mikulčice in South Moravia in the Czech Republic will recognize this Luhy. Likewise the archetypes and models for some of the

[10] B. Fiala, *V Rasticově městě* (Prague, 1964).

[11] P. Hejcman, *Zlatý solid* (Prague, 1964).

characters appearing in the detective story were living archaeologists and historians. The plot follows a police investigation into the loss of a unique find, a gold solidus, which subsequently involves espionage activity. The fact is that a Byzantine gold coin, placed in the mouth of a corpse before burial as an *obolus* (to pay Charon, the ferryman of the dead), had actually been found in a grave at the three-aisled basilica in Great Moravian Mikulčice – a gold solidus showing the Byzantine Emperor Michael III, minted 856–866. Hejcman's historical trilogy *Cesty knížecí I–III* [Princely paths I–III][12] takes place in the ninth century at the time of the Great Moravian Empire under Rostislav and Svatopluk, portraying the relationships between old Moravia and the Frankish and Byzantine empires.

The second period that saw contact between the Czech lands and Byzantium that has been adapted for fiction is that of the crusades in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, dealt with by the Czech novelist Josef Svátek (1835–1897), as well as Václav Beneš Třebízský, Alois Jirásek, and Zikmund Winter (who was one of the most prolific Czech and Moravian authors of historical novels). The erudite Svátek drew the material for his works from archives and so his historical novels, with their rich and fantastic plots, are outstanding for their wealth of historical and cultural detail.

Josef Svátek's historical novel *Čeští křižáci* [*Czech Crusaders*],[13] subtitled *Román ze století XII.* [*Novel from the Twelfth Century*], harks back to the First (eleventh century), and particularly the Second Crusade, with its organizers and leaders (Bernard of Clairvaux, Peter of Amiens, Louis VII, Conrad III and Vladislav II). Prompted by a document by Bernard of Clairvaux (1147), the Czech King Vladislav II gathers an army in Austria, from where the crusaders were to be transported (down the Danube) across Hungary and the Balkans, to Constantinople. However, Vladislav's divisions never got to the Holy Land, as they were weakened from fighting the Turks in Asia Minor, while intrigues at the Prague court compelled Vladislav II to return with his retinue to Bohemia. Vladislav's participation in the crusades was the main reason why Svátek dealt with the subject of the crusades. His novel portrays Vladislav II, with artistic licence, as an adventurer, who allowed himself to be lured into military intervention to free the Holy Sepulchre by fire and sword from the hands of the infidels; and to protect and save the Christian world from the Muslims. Although the novel is not too particular about historical accuracy, its hero and

[12] P. Hejcman, *Cesty knížecí I–III* (Gottwaldov, 1960; Brno, 2003).

[13] J. Svátek, *Čeští křižáci: Román ze století XII.* (Prague, 1869; Prague, 1908; Prague, 1926; Prague, 1941; Český Těšín, 1998; Třebíč, 2002).

chief protagonist Vladislav II was a real-life figure, although not everything that we read in the novel is based on or supported by historical sources. Vladislav II (1140–1174) really did take part in the Second Crusade, and on the basis of a feudal oath became a liegeman (*lisios anthropos*) or vassal of the Byzantine Emperor Manuel I Komnenos (1143–1180). Vladislav II's status as a liegeman of Manuel I Komnenos influenced the status of the territories he conquered in Asia Minor. However, a number of the characters in the novel are either fictitious, and so never really existed, or are several historical figures combined into one literary protagonist.

The publication and success of Svátek's Čeští křižáci during the Second World War shows how the Czech nation, in such times of arduous tribulation, turned to such glorious periods of Czech history and specifically to the old historical subject of the crusaders – Christian warriors against the infidel Muslim non-believers. This subject matter – Czech Christians fighting against Muslim non-believers – was held by the German Nazi occupying forces to be so irrelevant to contemporary concerns that they did not attempt to censor it or its suppression. On the contrary, this novel about warriors under the sign of the cross, led by the German Emperor Conrad III, would have been congenial to the occupation censors, for after all it was about German history and German expansion eastwards into Asia Minor and the Orient – a medieval *Drang nach Osten*, with numerous contemporary resonances.

During the latter half of the twentieth century, the period of the crusades also captivated Jana Svobodová (born 1951), a Czech historian of modern (contemporary) history and a writer. In her chronologically ordered series of novels *Rozlet císařské orlice* [*Flight of the Imperial Eagle*][14] and her trilogy *Život císařův I–III* [*Life of the Emperor I–III*],[15] the author deals with the thirteenth century, focusing in detail on Frederick II Hohenstaufen (1208–1250), the King of Sicily and Jerusalem, and Holy Roman Emperor, named in Italian situations as Federico. His life-story is portrayed in the setting of the religious and political conflicts; and the struggle with the Papacy and the Guelphs, the Lombard League and Pope Gregory IX for control over Italy. This colourful historical narrative relates the story of the chief protagonists in the context of actual historical events, but only sporadically do we come across references to Byzantium. The author mentions Byzantine merchants from the Greek island of Zakynthos, who sailed to Syracuse, the capital of the Kingdom of

[14] J. Svobodová, *Rozlet císařské orlice* (Prague, 1999).

[15] J. Svobodová, *Život císařův I–III (Vůně santalu, Jilm rozťatý bleskem, Pergamen a meč)* (Ostrava, 1999–2000).

Sicily, to sell goods ('fired bowls, cups and, of course, fragrant essential oils and ointments and ornaments'), bringing the plague with them. The author describes 'chests full of jewels, silverware and essential oils',[16] for which the Byzantine merchants were paid in gold. This brings to mind Frederick II's journey to Baghdad and the trade between the Holy Roman Empire and the city-republic of Venice on the Adriatic coast, which, after the conquest of Constantinople in 1204 by the Fourth Crusaders, had reduced the power of the Byzantine Empire and had become the hegemon of the Mediterranean. The *Život císařův* trilogy portrays Frederick II's stay at the court of Sultan Mehmed ibn Malik al-Qasim in Baghdad, where he concluded a peace agreement with the aim of preventing wars between Christian and Muslim countries (the ideal of pacifism), and where he befriended the Sultan's son Omar, later the ambassador of the Baghdad Sultan to the Emperor's court in Syracuse, with whom he jointly undertook a journey around the courts of the Christian monarchs in Europe. After their return, Omar was abducted by knights from military orders and later released during the Sixth Crusade. The story ends with Frederick's life-changing decision to seek out the mysterious 'Green Land', a potential heaven and paradise on earth. Jana Svobodová's literary output is grounded in her knowledge of the issues described. She drew her facts from archive studies, partly of hitherto unknown documents on Frederick II, on the crusades and the military orders. Nevertheless, her adaptation of historical material did not avoid artistic licence nor did she limit her imagination.

It is evident from this summary that, for the Czech and Moravian historical novel, the great prose-epic genre, with its distinctive loose and elastic structure, embracing a broad range of events, social relations, psychological situations and phenomena, 'Byzantium' was a marginal subject during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In the Czech and Moravian historical novel, which permits great variety in its contents, material and motifs, and diversity in its compositional structure and artistic devices, emphasis was placed on relationship issues between the Czech lands and the Byzantine Empire in the Great Moravian period and in the period of the crusades. Although the activities of the Byzantine mission to Great Moravia between 863 and 885 were relatively short-lived and rather marginal in view of subsequent historical developments, they left permanent traces on Moravian and Czech culture and consciousness, which could not be ignored. The memory of the Byzantine–Slavonic, and particularly the Great Moravian period in Czech

[16] Svobodová, *Rozlet císařské orlice*, for example 203, 204, 245, 252, 253–4, 255, 287.

history, found an echo not only during the Middle Ages (with the introduction of the Slavonic liturgy and the convocation of Croatian Glagolitic monks at the Prague *Na Slovanech* [*At the Slavs*] Emmaus Monastery by the Holy Roman Emperor and Czech King Václav IV (1378–1419), and in relations between the Czech Hussites and Constantinople), but also in the modern age, during times of tribulation for the Czech nation, when national independence was in danger (the National Revival, various occupations, wars and revolutions).

To evaluate the above works in terms of their literary genres, they are historical novels and detective novels. To evaluate them from a sociological standpoint in accordance with their readership-orientation, the target group comprised both adult readers (literature for adults) and young readers (children's literature). Professionally, the authors of the historical works under review here were not only writers (novelists), but also historians, psychiatrists, translators, cultural historians and journalists. The historical novel, thanks to the flexibility of its formal planning, which underpinned the diverse material taken from life, had the greatest information-providing and didactic capacity and so was very popular both in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries among the broadly defined reading public in the Czech and Moravian lands.

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Chapter 11

Byzantium in the Polish Mirror: Byzantine Motifs in Polish Literature in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries

Przemysław Marciniak[1]

The relationships between Poland and the Byzantine Empire were limited and incidental.[2] They culminated in the Battle of Varna, when, on 10 November 1444, the combined forces of Poland, Hungary and Wallachia under Vladislaus III Jagiellonian were defeated by the Ottoman army. Thus, the so-called 'Varna Crusade' came to its bitter end. Soon the same fate met what was left of Byzantium. As Małgorzata Dąbrowska noted, 'Only Długosz and some annalists spared a tear or two on this tragedy, but Długosz especially wrote about it after considerable time'.[3] Długosz perhaps shed a tear or two, but he also used this opportunity to reproach the Byzantines for luxury, greediness and even the fact that in Constantinople there were supposedly brothels with young boys.[4] Długosz's list – luxury, greediness, lustfulness and treachery – defines a typical Byzantine as seen from the Western perspective. Yet the Polish

[1] University of Silesia, Poland.

[2] Thietmar noted in his chronicle that Boleslav the Brave sent the embassy to Constantinople in 1018 after having conquered Kiev, see O. Halecki, 'La Pologne et l'Empire byzantine', *Byzantion* 75 (1931), 298; see also M. Salamon, '*Amicus* or *hostis*? Boleslav the Valiant and Byzantium', *Byzantinoslavica* 54 (1993), 114–20; G. Prinzing, *Bizantyńskie aspekty średniowiecznej historii Polski* [*Byzantine Aspects of Polish Medieval History*], *Xenia Posnaniensia* 5 (Poznań, 1994).

[3] M. Dąbrowska, 'From Poland to Tenedos: The Project of Using the Teutonic Order in the Fight against the Turks after the Fall of Constantinople', in G. Prinzing and M. Salamon, eds, *Byzanz und Ostmitteleuropa 950–1543. Beiträge zu einer table-ronde des XIX International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Copenhagen 1996* (Wiesbaden, 1999), 165–76.

[4] Jan Długosz, *Roczniki czyli Kroniki sławnego Królestwa Polskiego* [*Annals or the Chronicles of the Famous Kingdom of Poland*], Vol. 5, D. Turkowska and M. Kowalczyk, eds, translated by J. Mrukówna (Warsaw, 1974), 145.

perception of Byzantium was not shaped by either medieval or Enlightenment historians but was born much later – during the partitions (1772–1918) when the Russian Empire, the Kingdom of Prussia and Austria divided up the Polish–Lithuanian commonwealth between themselves.[5] More precisely it was born in that part of Poland seized by Russia. An eminent Polish scholar, Jerzy Axer, noted recently that for Adam Mickiewicz, the greatest of Polish poets, Byzantium 'had a Russian face'.[6] In other words, Adam Mickiewicz, like most of his nineteenth-century compatriots living under the Russian yoke, looked at Byzantium as the medieval version of Russia[7]. The word 'Byzantine' almost inevitably began to mean 'Russian/Orthodox' for nineteenth-century Poles.[8] Russification of Polish lands included, among other things, the construction of Orthodox churches and the transformation of existing buildings into the 'Byzantine' style.[9] A dictionary of the Polish language, edited in 1900, defines the adjective 'Byzantine' as 'bizarre', 'gaudy' and 'domed'.[10] The last of these must have been a Polish reaction to the great number of Orthodox churches built by the Russians. The uniqueness of the Polish reception of Byzantium in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries lies in the fact that it was almost completely disassociated from the historical state of the 'East Roman Empire', and rather mediated through Russia, which claimed to be Byzantium's successor. As a result, Byzantium did not really exist as a coherent concept in the Polish common awareness. This allowed the writers to manipulate what they claimed to be the 'Byzantine reality'. Perhaps the best-known example (and the one that still enjoys considerable popularity today) of the combination of these two views on Byzantium – the medieval version

[5] Nineteenth-century Polish historians such as Joachim Lelewel knew and valued Gibbon's history. To what extent his work influenced their thinking about Byzantium is difficult to tell.

[6] J. Axer, 'Mickiewicz – zbuntowany filolog klasyczny (wypowiedź niebezinteresowna)' [Mickiewicz – a revolted classical philologist (an impartial note)], in A. Nawarecki and B. Mytych-Forajter, eds, *Wykłady lozańskie Adama Mickiewicza* [*Adam Mickiewicz's Lausanne Lectures*] (Katowice, 2006), 37

[7] On Mickiewicz and Byzantium see O. Krysowski, *Tradycja bizantyjska w twórczości Mickiewicza* [*Byzantine Tradition in Mickiewicz's Writings*] (Warszawa, 2009).

[8] M. Dąbrowska, 'Byzance, source de stéréotypes dans la conscience des Polonais', in M.-F. Auzépy, ed., *Byzance en Europe* (Paris, 2003), 43–54.

[9] See for instance A. Tuszyńska, *Rosjanie w Warszawie* [*Russians in Warsaw*] (Warsaw, 1992), 131: 'En 1894 [...] Varsovie avait 560 000 habitants dont 19 000 orthodoxes', M. Dąbrowska, 'Byzance, source de stéréotypes', 46: 'Les églises orthodoxes, au nombre de neuf avant 1910, n'étaient pas proportionnés à leurs besoins religieux'.

[10] *Słownik Języka Polskiego pod red. J. Karłowicza, A. Kryńskiego, Wł. Niedźwiedzkiego*, Vol. 1, A–G (Warsaw, 1900), 160a.

of Russia; and at the same time a mythologised space – is the famous tragedy by Tadeusz Miciński *W mrokach Złotego Pałacu czyli Bazilissa Teofanu* [*In the Darkness of the Golden Palace of Empress Theophanu*], 1906.[11] The play draws, very loosely in fact, on the story of Empress Theophano (Teofanu in the Polish play). As one scholar put it, this work is not a 'document of Byzantinism', but rather a synthesis of the Byzantine world where characters, both historical and legendary, from different periods, appear simultaneously.[12] In Miciński's play, Byzantium played a role of a liminal state whose primary function was to act as bridge between the First and the Third Rome (Moscow).[13] In other words, the plot serves to express Miciński's own ideas about the future historical role of the Slavs.[14]

In what follows, I have chosen three texts written in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that draw on Byzantine tradition to illustrate how the typical Polish understanding of Byzantium and Byzantine culture was expressed in *belles lettres*. The first of my examples, the novel *Peter and Asan* (*Piotr i Asan*), clearly shows how Byzantium equated with Russia served to express the political agenda of nineteenth-century Polish patriots. The second of my examples, the drama *Photius* (*Focyusz*) is a reworking of the so-called 'revenge tragedy' set in sixth-century Constantinople. *The Destruction of Trebizond* (*Zburzenie Trebizondy*) demonstrates how its author, drawing on Byzantine motifs, created a fairy-tale-like reality to convey his views on the condition of the contemporary Polish society.

Peter and Asan

During the partitions of Poland, direct criticism of the Russian occupation would have been fraught with possible persecutions. This explains why authors often veiled their intentions behind stories seemingly unrelated to the contemporary Polish situation. The novel *Peter and Asan* by Teodor Tomasz

[11] O. Jurewicz, 'Byzanz in der polnischen Literatur des 19. und 20. Jh', in: E. Konstantinou, ed., *Byzantinische Stoffe und Motiven in der europäischen Literatur des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt am Main–Berlin–Bern–New York–Paris–Wien, 1998), 137–44.

[12] E. Rzewuska, *O dramaturgii Tadeusza Micińskiego* [*On the Dramatic Art of Tadeusz Miciński*] (Wrocław–Warsaw–Krakow–Gdansk, 1977), 46.

[13] See P. Marciniak, *Ikona dekadencji. Wybrane problem europejskiej recepcji Bizancjum od XVII do XX wieku* [*The Icon of Decadence: Selected Problems of the European Reception of Byzantium from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Centuries*] (Katowice, 2009), 144–51.

[14] Rzewuska, *O dramaturgii Tadeusza Micińskiego*, 46.

Jeż (a pen-name for Zygmunt Miłkowski) is a typical example of such a *roman à clef*.[15]

The plot of the novel draws on the history of the founders of the Second Bulgarian Empire – Peter Theodore and Asen – and more precisely their struggle for the independence of the medieval Bulgarian state. The historicity of the story is supported by the list of the prominent Byzantine historians whose authority is evoked in the 'Introduction': Niketas Choniates, George Kodinos, George Akropolites and George Kedrenos. Whether or not this was true or the author was merely displaying his knowledge is irrelevant since the historical plot was only a pretext to narrate a different story. Miłkowski employed the principle of so-called *romantic historicism* in his novel in order to use the past to comment on contemporary issues.[16] The Bulgarian case was especially appealing for the Polish author. The co-called Second Bulgarian Empire regained its freedom after a war with Byzantium – which for the Polish author was a medieval avatar, as was said previously, of the Russian Tsardom. What is more, nineteenth-century Bulgaria was again the enslaved country, exactly like Poland – this time by the Ottoman Sultanate. However, it was liberated (at least partially) in 1878, which gave Polish patriots new hope. By the time the third edition of *Peter and Asan* went to press in 1906, the fate of Bulgaria was completely different.[17]

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[15] The novel was initially published in *Dziennik Literacki* in Lviv (1860). In 1869 the first book edition appeared under the title *Asan: ustęp z dziejów Słowian balkańskich: powieść historyczna* [*Asan: A Fragment from the History of Balkan Slavs: A Historical Novel*]. It was reprinted in Warsaw in 1906 as *Piotr i Asan. Powieść historyczna z dziejów Słowian balkańskich XII wieku* [*Peter and Asan: A Historical Novel on the Fate of Balkan Slavs in the 12th Century*]. The change in the title was meant to point to the two different attitudes towards the enslaved homeland (Bulgaria) presented by the two brothers. The longest treatment of the novel is to be found in W. Ratajczak, *Teodor Tomasz Jeż. Zygmunt Miłkowski i wiek XIX* [*Teodor Tomasz Jeż. Zygmunt Miłkowski and the 19th Century*] (Poznan, 2006), 61–5.

[16] Ratajczak, *Teodor Tomasz Jeż*, 62. On romantic historicism see R. Ackerman, *The Myth and Ritual School: J.G. Frazer and the Cambridge Ritualists* (London, 2002), 20: 'Romantic historicism completely transformed the idea of the past, and its relations to the present. The basic thesis of historicism is quite simple: The subject matter of history is human life in its totality and multiplicity'.

[17] It is worth noting that the novel was widely read in Bulgaria, see E. Georgijew, 'Polsko-bułgarskie więzy literackie w epoce Adama Mickiewicza' ['Polish–Bulgarian literary relationships in the times of Adam Mickiewicz'], in K. Wyka and J. Rużyło-Pawłowska, eds, *Adam Mickiewicz (1855–1955). Międzynarodowa Sesja Naukowa Polskiej Akademii Nauk 17–20.04.1956* [*Adam Mickiewicz (1855–1955). International Session of the Polish Academy of Science 17–20.04.1956*] (Wrocław, 1958), 643–5 and 657–9; Ratajczak, *Teodor Tomasz Jeż*, 62, note 172.

If Byzantium occupying medieval Bulgaria represented the Russian occupation of contemporary Poland, the attitudes of the two protagonists, Peter and Asan (Asen) towards this enslavement symbolised two different patriotic attitudes. Whereas Peter seems to genuinely love his motherland, he also accepts the fact that it is no longer independent. By contrast, for Asan, the Byzantine 'occupation' is something that defines his unlucky homeland, something that cannot be accepted:

> My motherland! [...] – one of them was saying – how beautiful you are! [...] My beautiful motherland [...] – the other one was saying – you are enslaved! In these two exclamations, two different personalities were expressed. The first one (Peter) loved beauty, the other one (Asan) motherland. For the first one this beauty sufficed [...]. The other one recognised the beauty [...] but this feeling was combined with a painful moan of his heart "You are enslaved".[18]

There is nothing Asan would not do to ensure his ultimate aim – the liberation of Bulgaria. He even kills the father of his lover, Maria, and, since this murder is blamed on the Byzantines, it stirs up hatred against Byzantium. A prominent Polish literary historian, Maria Janion, called *Peter and Asan* 'a patriotic and uprising instruction'.[19] Indeed, this novel played an important role for the participants of the January Uprising (1863), which was yet another attempt, though unsuccessful, at freeing Poland from the Russian yoke.[20]

Important from the patriotic point of view, the novel was, unfortunately, equally successful in reinforcing the negative stereotype of Byzantium as the medieval version of Russia. Since at that time Polish studies on Byzantium were virtually non-existent, the image of the Byzantine Empire as an ultimate oppressor was perpetuated in the common awareness. After Poland had regained its freedom in 1918, some of these stereotypes lessened and consequently *Peter and Asan* did not stand the test of time. In an article written in 1936, Stanisław Witkowski criticised the novel, claiming that the patriotic and political disquisitions are too long and in fact hinder the plot.[21]

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[18] *Asan: ustęp z dziejów Słowian balkańskich: powieść historyczna*, 6. The translation is mine – it does not render the specificity of the nineteenth-century Polish language.

[19] M. Janion, Życie pośmiertne Konrada Wallenroda [The afterlife of Konrad Wallenrod] (Warsaw, 1990), 256.

[20] Ratajczak, *Teodor Tomasz Jeż*, 63.

[21] S. Witkowski, 'Cesarstwo Bizantyńskie w powieści polskiej' ['The Byzantine Empire in a Polish novel'], in *Księga pamiątkowa ku czci Leona Pinińskiego* [*Festschrift for Leon Piniński*], Vol. 2 (Lviv, 1936), 385.

What was meant to be the most important feature of the book became its weakness once Poland was an independent state. Byzantine history, culture and literature were more intensely studied in Poland during the inter-war period, and this changed circumstance might have affected how the novel was read and understood.[22]

Byzantium – A Story of One Revenge

Before Empress Theodora began her career in literature, theatre and film,[23] the story of the general Belisarius was the most popular Byzantine literary motif. In fact, it was not really a true story but rather a legend, according to which Belisarius was blinded at the order of Justinian and spent the rest of his life as a beggar in Constantinople (or in Rome).[24] Blind Belisarius was a hero of countless school dramas, novels, paintings and even an opera by Donizetti.[25] However, most of these stories follow more or less a similar pattern: envious Justinian orders Belisarius to be blinded (with some variations as to why the

[22] Symbolically, the beginning of Polish Byzantine Studies is marked by the publication of the book by Leo Sternbach, *Meletemata graeca* (Vienna, 1886), see W. Ceran, *Historia i bibliografia rozumowana bizantynologii polskiej* (1800–1998) [*History and Thematic Bibliography of Polish Byzantine Studies (1800–1998)*] 2 vols (Łódź, 2001), 26.

[23] See P. Marciniak, 'And the Oscar goes to... Emperor! Byzantium in cinema', in I. Nilsson and P. Stephenson, eds, *Wanted! Byzantium: The Desire for a Lost Empire* (Uppsala, 2014), 247–55.

[24] An exhaustive list of both Byzantine and post-Byzantine texts in which Belisarius is the protagonist can be found in R. Cantarella, 'La Διήγησις ωραιοτάτη του θαυμαστού εκείνου του λεγομένου Βελισσαρίου [...] Testo Critico, con una appendice: sulla fortuna della leggenda di Belisario', *Studi bizantini e neoellenici* 4 (1935), 153–202. For a more recent article see for instance A. S. Barrovecchio, 'Histoire de Bélisaire dans la literature française (sous la direction de J. Dagen, Université Paris IV – Sorbonne)', *Revue Voltaire* 6 (2006), 43–52.

[25] In fact, Gibbon had already discredited this tale; see E. Gibbon, *The History of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire*, ed. by J.B. Bury, with an introduction by W.E.H. Lecky, vol. 7 (New York, 1906), 287–8, chapter 43, note 69: 'The source of this idle fable might have been derived from a miscellaneous work of the xiith century, the Chiliads of John Tzetzes, a monk (Basil. 1546, ad calcem Lycophront. Colon. Allobrog. 1614, in Corp. Poet. Graec.) [...] This moral or romantic tale was imported into Italy with the language and manuscripts of Greece; repeated before the end of the xvth century by Crinitus, Pontanus, and Volaterranus, attacked by Alciat, for the honour of the law; and defended by Baronius (A.D. 561, No. 2, &c.) for the honour of the church. Yet Tzetzes himself had read in other chronicles, that Belisarius did not lose his sight, and that he recovered his fame and fortunes'. On the opera see, A. Porter, 'Donizetti's "Belisario"', *The Musical Times* vol. 113, no. 1549 (1972), 257–9 and 261.

emperor punishes his general, who executes the order, what happens next, whether Belisarius is sentenced to exile rather than blinded, etc.). Belisarius, thus, became a paradigmatic victim of a tyrant. Adam Bełcikowski's drama *Photius* (*Focyusz*), published in 1898, presents a completely different reinterpretation of Belisarius's story.[26] The plot of this drama is a creative reworking, or perhaps rather a development, of the love-affair story between Antonina, Belisarius's wife and Theodosius as described by Procopius in the *Anecdota*. The main *dramatis personae* are Photius[27] – Antonina's natural son; Belisarius; Antonina; Theodosius – her lover, and Joanna (Ioannina) – a daughter of Belisarius. Bełcikowski initially follows the story as recounted by the Byzantine historian but at some point his version markedly differs from the historical truth. *Focyusz* becomes a story of (double) crime and (double) revenge – not only is Belisarius betrayed by his wife Antonina, but his daughter Joanna also commits suicide as a result of an intrigue devised by Empress Theodora. Photius, who wants to help the general and who does not accept his mother's infidelity, attempts to convince Belisarius to return to Italy and proclaim himself a king. He also lures his mother's lover Theodosius to Belisarius's camp where he tricks Theodosius into killing Antonina thus indirectly committing matricide. Photius' machinations are foiled by the arrival of the imperial couple. Justinian, upon learning that Belisarius was only an unwitting part of Photius' plot, sentences his general to exile and Photius to death. The latter commits suicide in the same tent where his mother was killed by Theodosius. This short summary does not give full credit to a very bloody and convoluted plot.

The most basic question is – was there a text that became the inspiration for Bełcikowski? A seemingly simple answer would be the *Anecdota* (*The Secret History*) by Procopius. Bełcikowski was very well educated and may have known both Greek and Latin.[28] Moreover, in 1856 a bilingual, Greek–French, edition of the *Anecdota* was published by F.-A. Isambert, which could have been used by the Polish writer. This would make *Focyusz* the very first Polish text inspired directly by a piece of Byzantine literature. While this is not entirely impossible, it seems that the real source of inspiration was rather Gibbon's *Fall*

[26] A. Bełcikowski, *Dramata i komedye*, Vol. III, *Król Mieczysław II, Focyusz* (Krakow, 1898).

[27] In the text, in order to avoid unnecessary confusion, I have decided to use commonly accepted forms 'Photius' and 'Belisarius' rather than their nineteenth-century Polish counterparts: 'Focyusz' and 'Belizaryusz'.

[28] R. Stachura, *Adam Bełcikowski – pisarz i historyk literatury* [*Adam Bełcikowski – A Writer and a Historian of Literature*] (Krakow, 2005).

and Decline. In *Chapter XLI: Conquests of Justinian, Character of Belisarius*, Gibbon describes Antonina's romance in a fairly detailed way. All historically accurate facts in Bełcikowski's text are taken from Gibbon; a direct knowledge of Procopius' work was therefore unnecessary. For instance, the scene where both Belisarius and Photius are on their knees, vowing revenge (Act III, scene 5), is based on Gibbon's words: 'he embraced the knees of the son of Antonina, adjured him to remember his obligations rather than his birth, and confirmed at the altar their holy vows of revenge and mutual defence'.[29]

In the last part of the tragedy, two tents have an important role to play – this is where Antonina is killed by her lover and Photius commits suicide. The tent as a place where revenge is executed appears in the Euripides' play *Hecuba*, where the heroine blinds Polymestor and kills his sons. This similarity is by no means accidental – *Focyusz* belongs to the plays described by literary historians as 'revenge tragedies'. It has been noted that the story of Antonina's son bears a clear resemblance to the tragedies of Orestes and Hamlet.[30] Therefore, the alterations in Belisarius'/Photius' story were made on purpose and this purpose was to use the Byzantine setting to tell a story about vengeance – the 'tent scene' links Bełcikowski's tragedy directly with the Attic revenge plays. When changing the story he got from Procopius via Gibbon, Bełcikowski obviously did not 'commit mistakes'; the changes were necessary to convey his own message. What is more, by changing the name of the slave who told Belisarius about the infidelity of his wife from Makedonia to Fenissa (both are topographical names), Bełcikowski suggested to his readers that the changes he introduced are conscious, not erroneous (Makedonia also features in Gibbon's story).

In Bełcikowski's drama nothing is 'Byzantine', since this word does not appear in the play. The stage directions do not mention any details about costumes or scenography apart from the short note that the story takes place in sixth-century Constantinople. It seems that, for the author of the play, the reality he described was rather more Roman (he uses this term several times in the work) than Byzantine – the latter was still a very vague concept in the Polish common awareness at that time. Perhaps Bełcikowski preferred to avoid

[29] Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, 170, chapter XLI.

[30] Literature on the play is very meagre, see for instance P. Chmielowski, 'Adam Bełcikowski', in *Nasza literatura dramatyczna* [*Our Dramatic Literature*] (Petersburg, 1898), Vol. I, 511; J. Kotarbiński, 'Adam Bełcikowski jako dramaturg' ['Adam Bełcikowski as a playwright'] (Warsaw, 1898), Vol. 2, 526–7; R. Skręt, 'Adam Bełcikowski', in J. Kulczycka-Saloni, H. Markiewicz and Z. Żabicki, eds, *Literatura polska w okresie realizmu i naturalizmu* [*Polish Literature in the Periods of Realism and Naturalism*] (Warsaw, 1969), Vol. 3, 77.

the term 'Byzantine' due to its 'Russian' connotations. It is also possible that the indeterminacy and exoticism of the period caused Bełcikowski to choose the times of Justinian for his own reworking of the timeless history of revenge.

Trebizond – This Is to Say, Nowhere

In 1936[31] Feliks Płażek (1882–1950), a lawyer and an author of plays inspired by mythological histories, created a drama entitled *Zburzenie Trebizondy. Bajka* [*The Destruction of Trebizond: A Fable*].[32] The play tells the story of the Emperor of Trebizond, who learns from his mother that he is not her real son but was switched at birth. The emperor imprisons his mother, who was able to send one of the patricians to a person to whom the papers documenting the switch were entrusted. But the emperor sends one of his soldiers, Theodore, who kills the patrician and takes the documents. Instead of handing them to the ruler, he delivers them to Michael, who, as Theodore informs him, is the real Emperor of Trebizond. Theodore promises his help, but in exchange Michael is supposed to help him to destroy the city, described as the 'nest of evil', and to rebuild it anew. Rioters wreak havoc on the city and destroy the palace. Amidst the chaos Michael is killed and the emperor flees.

Unlike the two previous works, *The Destruction of Trebizond* has almost nothing to do with historic reality. However, unlike in *Focyusz*, the world created in the drama has obvious Byzantine connotations. The mother of the ruling emperor twice asserts her Byzantine lineage by saying that she has blood of Byzantine emperors in her veins.[33]

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[31] In the same year, Zofia Kossak-Szczucka published a novel about the Fall of Constantinople – *Puszkarz Orbano* (*Orban the Gunner*), which draws on the story of Orbano, a creator of the big siege canon made for Mehmed II. Kossak-Szczucka claimed in the novel's afterword that her text is entirely based on primary and secondary sources and lists the works by Doukas, Chalkokondyles and Kritoboulos as well as a book by Gustave Schlumberger. Written three years before World War II the story of the Fall of Constantinople might have mirrored concerns of Polish society caused by the constantly unstable situation in Europe. The novel, recently republished, was acclaimed by Catholic web-portals (the author herself was a known Catholic activist) and described as a timeless story of the importance of moral choices, responsibility for one's family and homeland. Such an interpretation, though possible as well, certainly ignores the historical context in which the novel was written.

[32] F. Płażek, *Zburzenie Trebizondy. Bajka* (Krakow, 1936). On his other plays, see M. Gajocha, 'Theatrical Reception of Antique-Style Plays by Feliks Płażek', in T. Sapota, ed., *Scripta Classica IV* (Katowice, 2007), 68–83.

[33] Płażek, *Zburzenie Trebizondy*, 29 and 31.

Long before the Polish play was written, there existed a myth of 'a princess of Trebizond' born after the Fall of Constantinople. The seventeenth-century novel *Il Calloandro* (later titled *Il Calloandro fedele*) by Giovanni Ambrosio Marini (1640)[34] tells a story of the fictional heir to the Byzantine throne, Calloandro, as well as Leonilda, the princess of Trebizond and Sufar, a Turkish prince. The princess of Trebizond features in the 'Princess of Trebizond' *opera buffa* by Jacques Offenbach (1869), and in the Polish play *Balladyna* by Juliusz Słowacki (1839), where the protagonist who wants to hide her true origins claims that she is a princess from Trebizond (Act IV). The Empress of Trebizond, Elena Comnena, is also a character in the now forgotten play *La Gloria* by Gabriele d'Annunzio.[35] A real-life person behind this more or less (in most cases – more) fictitious character was Theodora Komnene, known also as Despina Hatun, a daughter of Emperor John IV of Trebizond, and a wife of Sultan Uzun Hassan.[36] *The Destruction of Trebizond* inscribes itself in this tradition, which presented Trebizond as an ahistorical and somewhat fairy-tale-like space. The Byzantine character of the story is reinforced not only by direct references to the Byzantine Empire but also by the names of the characters appearing in the play: Aleksy (Alexios), Nikodem, Prokop (Procopius), Nikefor, Zenon. It seems that the author succeeded in his task, since Józef Birkenmajer (1897–1939), a Polish poet, Slavist and scholar, described the text under discussion as 'a drama with Byzantine background'.[37]

Byzantium, however, was once again only an excuse to present more contemporary issues. Another play by Płażek, *Pogrom* (1907), also set in a historical context, was a clear comment on its times.[38] *The Destruction of Trebizond* voices criticism of the bourgeoisie and openly praises, like other Polish writers before, the vital force of peasants. The (false) emperor, upon learning that he comes from a peasant family, tells his mother that he is not corrupted by the debauchery and sloth of many generations of aristocracy.

[34] *Romanzieri del Seicento*, a cura di M. Capucci (Torino, 1974), 259–461. A story of different titles, editions and translations of this play is well summarised in G. Tiraboschi, *Storia della letteratura italiana*, Vol. VIII, parte seconda (Venice, 1825), 688. See also D. Conrieri, '"Il Calloandro fedele" di Gio. Ambrogio Marini: Indagini bibliografiche e critiche', *Giornale Storico della letteratura italiana* 147:458 (1970), 260–91.

[35] G. d'Annunzio, *La Gloria. Tragedia* (Milan, 1927).

[36] See Ch. Diehl, 'La princesse de Trébizonde. Histoire orientale', in *L'Orient Byzantin* (Paris, 1917), 203–27, especially 225–7.

[37] J. Birkenmajer, 'W hołdzie Leonowi Pińskiemu' ['Festschrift for Leon Piński'], *Ruch Literacki* 12/7 (1937), 167.

[38] J. Maślanka, 'Literatura a dzieje bajeczne' ['Literature and fairy-tales-based history'] (Warsaw, 1990), 381–2.

What is more, even though he was taught how to speak idle words and how to be a hypocrite, he does have the sane brain of a villager. It is worth noting that the description of Trebizond aristocracy – debauchery, sloth, hypocrisy – sounds very much like the typical description of something 'Byzantine'. I would also argue that *The Destruction of Trebizond* inscribes itself within orientalist discourse, which sees Byzantium (and here Trebizond) as inferior to Western countries and societies.[39] All in all, Płażek's play seems to be a critical depiction of his contemporary Polish society that veils its true intentions behind Byzantine scenery.

Conclusions

The texts I have chosen to discuss are today, in 2015, almost forgotten outside the academic milieu. What links them together is an agenda hidden beneath the Byzantine reality they evoke. All three texts discussed fairly adequately point to how Byzantine motifs were used and reworked in Polish literature. For most of the Polish writers Byzantium was either an avatar of the Russian Empire (at least for those who happened to live in the Russian-occupied Polish lands) or a fairy-tale-like space defined by the typical repertoire of notions connected to the empire – luxury, grandeur, pompousness and the like. This, of course, had much to do with what Averil Cameron has termed 'the absence of Byzantium'[40] – historic Byzantium was virtually non-present in either scholarly or public discourse in Poland. I would argue that, while *Peter and Asan* embodies a fairly stereotypical understanding of Byzantium in this part of Poland which remained occupied by the Russians, *Focyusz* by Bełcikowski and *The Destruction of Trebizond* by Płażek are rather manifestations of an incidental interest in Byzantine culture showed by their authors. The 'Russian connotations' of the Byzantine Empire today have almost completely faded. Similarly, Byzantium, though still exotic, is no longer a conceptual *terra incognita*. Therefore, common interpretational frameworks of the texts described above became unreadable, which most likely accounts for their disappearance.

[39] A. Cameron, 'Byzance dans le débat sur orientalisme', in M.-F. Auzépy, ed., *Byzance en Europe* (Paris, 2003), 235–50.

[40] A. Cameron, 'The absence of Byzantium', *Nea Hestia* 163 (2008), 4–59.

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Chapter 12

'Constantinople Our Star': The Image of Byzantium and Byzantine Aesthetics in *Fin-de-Siècle* and Modernist Poetry

Adam J. Goldwyn[1]

On 25 April 1915, British and allied troops landed on the Gallipoli Peninsula opposite the Ottoman Army under Kemal Ataturk, where they began nearly eight months of some of the most bloody trench warfare the world had known. The campaign would end on 9 January of the following year with the defeat of the British and their allies and the deaths of 120,000 soldiers. In July of 1915, in the midst of this carnage, the English Modernist artist Wyndham Lewis published the second issue of the journal *Blast*, an important organ for that branch of English Modernism which Ezra Pound termed Vorticism. In it, Lewis wrote an article entitled 'Constantinople Our Star', which begins: 'That Russia will get Constantinople should be the prayer of every good artist in Europe. And, more immediately, if the Turks succeeded in beating off the Allies' attack, it would be a personal calamity to those interested in Art'.[2] Lewis elaborates two reasons why he believes this: first, he asserts the decay of English artistic culture; and second, the possibility of its renewal with the capture of Constantinople. Among the advantages, he writes that it would lead to 'an entirely new type of Englishmen, in the person of our poet, [who] would be introduced to the amazed Oriental' and 'real efforts in Sciences and Arts more intelligently encouraged than in Germany'.[3]

But more than just the benefits of life in Constantinople, however, would be the benefits it might have on England itself: 'If to the personal good-manners of the Englishmen [...] they could add an organized intellectual life, if they could substitute for the maid-servant's or the cabman's grin [...]

[1] North Dakota State University.

[2] W. Lewis, 'Constantinople Our Star', *Blast* 2 (Jul., 1915), 11.

[3] Lewis, 'Constantinople', 11.

a little organized effort to think and understand life in some other way than as business, monstrous "Neeches" of foreign nations would no longer be able to call them "the unphilosophic race"'.[4] Thus, he concludes, 'let us keep our eyes fixed on Constantinople'.[5] For Lewis, then, the non- (pre- and, in Lewis's imagination, post-) Turkish Constantinople was a symbol of artistic and cultural renewal, but one that remained distant, both geographically and temporally: a symbolic city, the depiction of which could be adapted to suit a variety of different utopian visions. This symbolic vision of Constantinople represents one strand of the city's importance to Modernists.

In addition to its symbolic significance, other Modernists looked to Byzantium and Byzantine art to help them form and articulate their own aesthetic principles. In his writings, posthumously published as *Speculations*, the English proto-Modernist (and friend and competitor of Lewis, among other influential Modernists)[6] critic T. E. Hulme, himself killed by a German shell in Belgium in 1917, noted another element of Byzantine art that would become important, particularly for English Modernists: 'The disgust of the trivial and accidental characteristics of living shapes, the searching after an austerity, a monumental stability and permanence, a perfection and rigidity, which vital things can never have, leads to the use of form which can almost be called *geometrical* (Cf. Byzantine, Egyptian and early Greek art)'.[7] Hulme

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[4] Lewis, 'Constantinople', 11.

[5] Lewis, 'Constantinople', 11. David Roessel argues in *In Byron's Shadow: Modern Greece in the English and American Imagination* (Oxford, 2001), that Lewis's piece is best read as a satire in which he 'ridiculed the inflated rhetoric surrounding the contemporary Gallipoli campaign, a campaign that in turn exploited the millennarian dreams about the long-held philhellenic belief about a revival of the Classical Greeks' (189). While it is certainly possible that Lewis is being satirical in his presentation, T. J. Bullen, in 'Byzantinism and Modernism', *The Burlington Magazine* 141 (Nov., 1999), 665–75, notes that, for Modernist critics such as T. E. Hulme, Lewis's artistic production represented 'the future' and 'that future depends upon a reading of the tendency of abstraction in Byzantine art' (675). 'Constantinople, Our Star' may be satirical, but the ideas in it are certainly not: Constantinople as a past and future utopia would lay hold of the poetic imaginations of Pound, Yeats and others. For other literary treatments of the dream of a re-captured Constantinople, see Roessel, *In Byron's Shadow*, 187ff.; for the influence of Byzantine art on Modernist painting, see Bullen, 'Byzantinism and Modernism'.

[6] For their fistfight over a woman (which, incidentally, Hulme won), see T. Hulme, *Selected Writings* (New York, 2003), xvi. For Hulme's interaction with and influence on other Modernists, including Pound and Eliot, see the introduction to Hulme, *Selected Writings*.

[7] Hulme returns to this characterisation repeatedly. *Speculations* (London, 1936), 53: 'Byzantine art is the exact contrary of [Renaissance art]. There is nothing vital in it [...] disgust with the trivial and accidental characteristics of living shapes, the searching after an austerity

argues that Byzantine and other forms of 'geometrical art [...] most obviously exhibit [...] no delight in nature and no striving after vitality. Its forms are always what can be described as stiff and lifeless', which are visible in 'the dead form of a pyramid and the suppression of life in a Byzantine mosaic'.[8] Hulme concludes that proof of the revived interest in Byzantine art 'is to be found in the actual creation of a new modern geometrical art'.[9]

Though Hulme was primarily talking about the visual arts, Byzantium as an ordered, stylised and artificial place finds its literary parallel in Oscar Wilde's *Decay of Lying*, written in 1891:

> The whole history of these arts in Europe is the record of the struggle between Orientalism, with its frank rejection of imitation, its love of artistic convention, its dislike to the actual representation of any object in Nature, and our own imitative spirit. Wherever the former has been paramount, as in Byzantium, Sicily and Spain, by actual contact or in the rest of Europe by the influence of the Crusades, we have had beautiful and imaginative work in which the visible things of life are transmuted into artistic conventions, and the things that Life has not are invented and fashioned for her delight. But wherever we have returned to Life and Nature, our work has always become vulgar, common and uninteresting.[10]

Wilde admired Byzantine art's abstract, anti-mimetic aesthetic, its high level of artifice and stylisation as opposed to the realism of Western art.

Whether Byzantine art was a formative source for Modernist aesthetics or whether Modernists shaped their impression of Byzantium to suit their own aesthetics is impossible to determine; nevertheless, the similarities between the two periods were appreciated by Modern artists and critics

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a *perfection* and rigidity which vital things can never have, lead here to the use of forms which can almost be called geometrical'; 'The abstract geometrical character of the Byzantine relief makes it much nearer to the Egyptian than to the Greek' (57); 'I saw Byzantine mosaics for the first time [...] I was able to see a geometrical art, as it were from the inside' (81).

8 Hulme, *Speculations*, 85.

9 Hulme, *Speculations*, 93.

10 O. Wilde, *The Major Works* (Oxford, 1989), 225. Perhaps it is Wilde's celebration of Oriental (including Byzantine) art's 'dislike to the actual representation of any object' and its 'fashion[ing] for her delight' those ornaments of imagination that 'Life has not' to which Bullen was referring when he spoke of Modern Art's appreciation of Byzantium as 'non-mimetic, tend[ing] towards the decorative and the abstract, and, above all, [giving] priority to the symbol' (Bullen, 'Byzantinism and Modernism', 665). For a more detailed account of Symbolist interpretation of Byzantine visual arts, see Bullen, 'Byzantinism and Modernism', 665–7.

alike: a contemporary viewer of the 1900 Exposition Universelle in Paris, in which 'a mass European public delighted in the first photographic display of Byzantine monuments',[11] noted that '[i]n some works of the 8th century we may recognize the same tendencies which have so strongly transformed the art of our own days. Many objects testified to this analogy: a piece of sculpture made one think of Bourdelle or Modigliani, a textile recalled Derain or Dufy, and there were several tapestries, the cartoons of which might have been drawn by Matisse'.[12]

The archaeologist Kostis Kourelis, in his 'Byzantium and the Avant-Garde', analyses the aesthetic principles that the Modernists saw in Byzantine (visual) art, an aesthetic that paralleled their own, or that was interpretively malleable enough that they could make it seem to, at any rate. He argues that Modernists saw in Byzantine art formal, theoretical and symbolic parallels to their own: 'The 20th century embraced Byzantium as a subversive precedent for modernity's historical rapture [*sic*] with tradition, incorporating a perceived artistic otherness, abstraction, and spirituality in its historical arsenal'.[13] As importantly, the reconstruction of Byzantine art and architecture in a modern (archaeological) context 'manifested the modern sensibilities of fragmentation, assemblage, and collage within its very walls'.[14] Though Kourelis is describing the visual arts, the aesthetic that he argues these visual artists found in Byzantine art is also mirrored in literature (in the transference of visual to literary Modernist and Byzantinist aesthetics, it is significant to note that Lewis himself was both poet and painter).

Similarly, the English critic Roger Fry,[15] objecting to a comparison between Impressionism and Naturalism, wrote: 'There is, I believe, a much truer analogy which might lead to a different judgment. Impression has existed before, in the Roman art of the Empire, and it too was followed, as I believe inevitably, by a movement similar to that observable in the

[11] K. Kourelis, 'Byzantium and the Avant-Garde: Excavations at Corinth, 1920s–1930s', *Hesperia* 76.2 (Apr.–Jun., 2007), 391–442, esp. 391. For a history of Byzantium in France (and elsewhere) before the Modernist period, see C. Diehl, 'Byzance dans la littérature', *La vie des peuples* 3 (1921), 676–87, and L. Bréhier, 'Byzance dans l'opinion et la littérature', *Revue de la Méditeranée* 13 (May–Jun., 1946), 257–72. Bullen argues that the rise of Byzantinism in Europe can be found earlier: 'after the 1860s', he identifies a series of international scholars who brought Byzantium to prominence, see Bullen, 'Byzantinism and Modernism', 665, n.6.

[12] Kourelis, 'Byzantium and the Avant-Garde', 393.

[13] Kourelis, 'Byzantium and the Avant-Garde', 393.

[14] Kourelis, 'Byzantium and the Avant-Garde', 393.

[15] For more on Fry's Byzantinism, see Bullen, 'Byzantinism and Modernism', 665–71.

Neo-Impressionists – we may call it for convenience Byzantinism'.[16] Thus, Modernist interpretations of Byzantine visual art were also reflective of the Modernist literary aesthetic: structurally, through the use of abstraction by the opposing forms of fragmentation and collage on the one hand and geometric stylisation on the other, and, conceptually, through Byzantine art's perceived symbolic power as a lost utopia. Byzantium represented a lost glory that, reimagined as a distant place of both past and future, could be the location of artistic, cultural and even spiritual renewal.

The Byzantine symbolic paradigm, however, was as antithetical to certain strains of Modernism as it was essential to others: Modernism, in Hulme's view, was not a single movement but was 'in fact composed of a great many distinct and even contradictory elements'.[17] He distinguishes between geometrical modern art and that Modernist form known as 'futurism, which is, in its logical form, the exact opposite of the art I am describing, being the deification of the flux, the last efflorescence of impressionism'.[18] In Italy, where futurism had its origins, Byzantium had a different connotation entirely. Among the various European national literatures, Italy in particular stands out for its rejection of all things Byzantine and, among the myriad manifesto modernisms, futurism stands out for the ferocity of its rejection of Byzantine art, both implicitly and explicitly.

In *The Futurist Manifesto*, published in *Le Figaro* on the 20 February 1909, Filippo Tommaso Marinetti declared the Futurists' avowed rejection of everything from the past in order to better celebrate the modern, the swift, the fast and the industrial: 'Eppure non avevamo un Amante ideale che ergesse fino alle nuvole la sua sublime figurea, né una Regina crudele a cui offrire le nostre salme, contorte a giusa di anelli bisantini!'[19] Because it lacks the clean straight lines that Futurists idealised, Byzantium and its art, symbolised by Marinetti's imagined twisted Byzantine ring, must be rejected.

Though Marinetti's main ire is directed towards everything in the past, Byzantium deserves special mention, not only in the *Futurist Manifesto*, but also in the *Manifesto of Futurist Architecture*, in which he argues: 'The new beauty of concrete and iron is profaned by the superimposition of

[16] R. Fry, 'Letter to the Editor', *The Burlington Magazine* 12 (1908), 374–6, esp. 374.

[17] Hulme, *Speculations*, 94.

[18] Hulme, *Speculations*, 94.

[19] F. Marinetti, *Teoria e invenzione futurista* (Milan, 1968), 8. 'And yet we had no idealized Lover whose sublime being rose up into the skies; no cruel Queen to whom we might offer up our corpses, contorted like Byzantine rings', F. Marinetti, *Critical Writings*, transl. D. Thompson (New York, 2008), 12.

carnival decorative incrustations justified neither by structural necessity nor by our taste, and having their origins in Egyptian, Indian or Byzantine antiquity or in that astounding outburst of idiocies and impotence known as "neo-classicism".'[20]

An earlier generation of Italian Modernists had rejected Byzantium too, though for entirely different reasons: 'For the generation of Italian intellectuals who came to maturity in 1880, Byzantium and Rome were powerful symbols, charged with a meaning both historical and political. Byzantium represented the decadent, effeminate past of Latin corruption and decline; Rome symbolized the glorious, virile past of Latin strength and conquest'.[21] Their objection to Byzantium lay not in its simply being from the past, but in their vision of the past: Byzantium as a Rome in decline, a view espoused most famously by Edward Gibbon in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, which, perhaps not incidentally, was first translated into French in 1813.[22] Within this context, Italian Modernists saw Byzantium not as a past utopia to be welcomed again, as did their Anglophone counterparts, but as a future dystopia to which their leaders were leading them:

> The *Risorgimento* generation of Italian intellectuals had promised a new Rome for united Italy, but for the generation of 1880 all visible signs pointed instead toward a new Byzantium. In their minds, Byzantium for Rome was more than a poetic metaphor; it was a nauseating political reality, producing disgust with existing society and a simultaneous nostalgia for a classical past whose stone and marble vestiges loomed as constant reminders the post-*Risorgimento* Italians were degenerate mutations in a race once prolific in heroes.[23]

[20] U. Conrads, *Programs and Manifestos on 20th Century Architecture* (Cambridge, 1964), 34. Though the majority of the manifesto was written by Antonio Saint'Elia, the reference to Byzantium was included by Marinetti.

[21] R. Drake, *Byzantium for Rome: The Politics of Nostalgia in Umberian Italy, 1878–1900* (Chapel Hill, 1980), xiii. In contrast, the Futurists rejected everything from the past, including Rome; writing, for example, in the 'Manifesto of Futurist Painters', Umberto Boccioni proclaims: 'Comrades, we tell you now that the triumphant progress of science makes profound changes in humanity inevitable, changes which are hacking an abyss between those docile slaves of past tradition and us free moderns. [...] We are sickened by the foul laziness of artists, who, ever since the sixteenth century, have endlessly exploited the glories of ancient Rome', M. Caws, *Manifesto: A Century of Isms* (Nebraska, 2001), 182.

[22] N. Vance, 'Decadence from Belfast to Byzantium', *New Literary History* 35.4 (2004), 563–72, esp. 563.

[23] Drake, *Byzantium for Rome*, xiii.

In his *We Renounce Our Symbolist Masters*, Marinetti urges the rejection of D'Annunzio in particular for

> distill[ing] the four intellectual poisons that we want to destroy once and for all. First, the sickly, nostalgic property of memory and of faraway places; second, a romantic sentimentalism, dripping with moonlight, which is elevated into the fatalistic ideal of Woman-Beauty; third, an obsession with the erotic, with the adulterous triangle, the spice of incest and the titillation of what Christians call sinfulness; fourth, an academic passion for the past, a mania for antiquity and for collecting things.[24]

Though speaking about Symbolism in general, Marinetti's reading is remarkably accurate regarding the Symbolist appropriation of Byzantium in particular. Théo Hannon's 'Vierges Byzantines' (1885) exemplifies the Symbolist appropriation of Byzantium as well as Marinetti's objections to it. In selecting Byzantine virgins whom, at the poem's conclusion, he describes as 'Mes catins [...] les Vierges chlorotiques',[25] Hannon exemplifies Marinetti's 'sickly, nostalgic poetry of memory and faraway places'.[26] The poet's sexual attraction to his subject, describing 'son corps de plâtre a des luisants / Bien seduisants'[27] exemplifies not only the 'fatalistic ideal of Woman-Beauty' and 'obsession with the erotic', but, moreover, 'the titillation of what Christians call sinfulness'.[28]

Antoine Abel Duvidal de Montferrier's 'Sonnet Byzantine' (1889) displays many of the same features as 'Vierges Byzantines'. Like the former poem, it celebrates the erotic passion of the poet for a woman described as possessing Byzantine attributes: 'Mystique beauté Byzantine'.[29] Like Hannon, who focuses on both his lover's scent ('les aromates / De vos peaux aromates' and 'Pour noter les parfums rôdeurs / Des mille odeurs / Qui sont l'encens de votre turne / Peau taciturne'),[30] and the exoticism of her finery ('son impalpable peignoir / De tulle noir / [...] le crépon morose'),[31] Montferrier also describes his beloved using such exotic descriptions:

[24] Marinetti, *Critical Writings*, 45.
[25] T. Hannon, *Les Rimes de Joie* (Brussels, 1885), 16.
[26] Marinetti, *Critical Writings*, 45.
[27] Hannon, *Rimes de Joie*, 14.
[28] Marinetti, *Critical Writings*, 45.
[29] A. Montferrier, *Sigilla: Le sentier, Petite drames et tableaux* (Paris, 1889), 51.
[30] Hannon, *Rimes de Joie*, 15.
[31] Hannon, *Rimes de Joie*, 14.

'Sur ton don qu'on reflet satine, / Tes cheveux sont comme un camail'.[32] Moreover, both Montferrier and Hannon describe their beloveds as inanimate things: the latter as being 'plâtre'[33] and the former as 'émail' and, later, 'peinte en vitrail'.[34] In this, both poets can be seen as forerunners of the Modernist aesthetic propounded by Hulme, Wilde, Fry and others[35] who admired Byzantine art's perceived 'rejection of imitation' and 'return to life' (Wilde)[36] and its 'austerity', 'monumental stability' 'and rigidity' in contrast to 'vital things'.[37]

Indeed, Hulme's friend and fellow Modernist T. S. Eliot's poem 'Lune de Miel', which contains the latter's only reference to Byzantium in his writings,[38] exemplifies Hulme's and Wilde's aesthetics and their collective adoption of earlier French *fin-de-siècle* ideas about Byzantium. The poem takes place in Ravenna,[39] where, in Bullen's analysis, the poet 'contrasts the couple with the Byzantine figure of St Apollinaris – stiff and ascetic ("raide et ascétique") who is walled up in the crumbling stones ("pierres écroulantes") of his church, "which still holds [...] the precise form of Byzantium" ("tient encore [...] la forme precise de Byzance"), and in a rapid series of sharp images Eliot contrasts the fretful irritations of daily life with the cool, austere "geometric" art of

[32] Montferrier, *Sigilla: Le sentier, Petite drames et tableaux*, 51.

[33] Hannon, *Rimes de Joie*, 14.

[34] Montferrier, *Sigilla: Le sentier, Petite drames et tableaux*, 51.

[35] For Byzantium as a Modernist rejection of Neo-Classicism and classicising tendency in Wilde and English verse generally, see E. Roditi, 'Oscar Wilde's Poetry as Art History', *Poetry* 67.6 (Mar., 1946), 322–38, here 333: 'Some of the more spirited students, following Pater's discovery of the decadent beauties of the Pervigilium Veneris, began to express their "modernistic" dissatisfactions with the rigid scheme of their studies by sometimes employing, in their compositions [...] almost Romanesque or Byzantine words for the use of which only an Ammianus Marcellinus or a Tzetzes could be quoted as authorities'.

[36] Wilde, *Major Works*, 225.

[37] Hulme, *Speculations*, 53.

[38] Bullen, 'Byzantinism and Modernism', 665.

[39] Though a far different Ravenna than Wilde's. In the latter's poem, 'Ravenna', he refers to Renaissance artists such as Dante and Giotto, romantics like Byron, and numerous places and people from Classical antiquity. No mention is made, however, of the city's Byzantine heritage, such as the church in 'Lune de Miel' or the mosaics that proved so influential to Modernists such as Yeats, Fry, Wilde, Arthur Symons and even the pre-Raphaelite Edward Burne-Jones. For Yeats, see Vance, 'Decadence from Belfast to Byzantium', 568, and N. Jeffares, 'The Byzantine Poems of W.B. Yeats', *The Review of English Studies* 22.85 (Jan., 1946), 44–52, 48; for Fry, see Bullen, 'Byzantinism and Modernism', 666; for Burne-Jones, see T. McAlindon, 'The Idea of Byzantium in William Morris and W.B. Yeats', *Modern Philology* 64 (May, 1967), 307–19, 312.

Byzantium'.[40] In his analysis, Bullen identifies the Hulmean 'geometric' nature of Eliot's Byzantium.

The poem, however, offers a more thorough application of Wilde's and Hulme's ideas. The 'pierres écroulantes' / 'crumbling stones' and the description of the church as 'Vieille usine désaffectée de Dieu' / 'the old abandoned factory of God', for example, suggest the decadent component of the poem, its focus on disintegration and decay, while the privileging of the statue of St Apollinaire over the living people also points to Hulme's and Wilde's appreciation of symbolically powerful artificial representation of living things over the meaninglessness of the living things themselves (Hulme's 'disgust of the trivial and accidental characteristics of living shapes, the searching after an austerity, a monumental stability and permanence, a perfection and rigidity, which vital things can never have'[41]).

Like French *fin-de-siècle* writers, Byzantium for the Anglophone Modernists was also a lost utopia. The utopian vision of Byzantium for the Anglophone Modernists, however, differed radically from their French predecessors. Rather than adopt 'the Decadents' notion of Byzantium as a magnificently sick city combining extremes of sensuality and asceticism',[42] the Anglophone Modernists adopted different Byzantine utopias: an earthly one, as in Pound's *Cantos*, a spiritual utopia, as in W. B. Yeats's Byzantium poems, and an all-encompassing unity combining both, as in the Arthurian poems of Charles Williams.[43]

A major theme in the *Cantos* is the desire to describe and define a mytho-historical utopian city, the journey to which is the *telos* of the poem's narrator's

[40] Bullen, 'Byzantinism and Modernism', 665.

[41] Hulme, *Selected Writings*, 188.

[42] McAlindon, 'The Idea of Byzantium', 307.

[43] The Decadents' exotic and seductive Byzantium appears in an off-handed way in Wallace Stevens's 'Peter Quince at the Clavier', see *Collected Poetry and Poems* (New York, 1997), a poem with much in common with decadent works (its subject matter, for example, of the rape of Susannah, the synaesthesia in the lines, 'Thinking of your blue-shadowed silk, / Is music', and the element of decay in the line, 'The body dies; the body's beauty lives' (72). Stevens describes the discovery of the Biblical Susannah's rape by her 'attendant Byzantines', later the 'simpering Byzantines' (73). Given the anachronism of Byzantines in Susannah's period, Eugene Nassar, in 'Wallace Stevens: "Peter Quince at the Clavier"', *College English* 26.7 (Apr., 1965), 549–51, suggests that he may have opted for the word because '"Byzantine" carr[ies the] suggestions perhaps of "ornateness" and "servility"', a reading that places the poem in the Decadent tradition of Byzantine exoticism (550). Laurence Perrine, '"Peter Quince at the Clavier": A Protest', *College English* 27.5 (Feb., 1966), 430, rightly criticises Nassar's view of the poem, but his claim about Byzantine exoticism nevertheless stands.

nostos.[44] Cantos 96–109, the section entitled *Thrones*, the cantos that deal most explicitly with Byzantium the city and with Byzantine history generally, are an attempt to describe the character and governance of this city. In Pound's words, 'The thrones in Dante's *Paradiso* are for the spirits of the people who have been responsible for good government. The thrones in *The Cantos* are an attempt to move out from egoism and to establish some definition of an order possible or at any rate conceivable on earth [...] *Thrones* concerns the states of mind of people responsible for something more than their personal conduct'.[45] In *Thrones*, Pound's focus is on the economic development of cities and empires, the proper administration of justice within them, and the proper exercise of political authority.[46] The first reference to Byzantium in *Thrones* is the narrator (the Lombard historian Paul the Deacon) reporting that he saw, 'Tiberius Constantine was distributist, / Justinian, Chosroes, Augustae Sophiae, / lumina mundi, ἐπικόμβια [...] τὸν λαόν / or a handout'.[47] These lines contain a reference to the proper distribution of wealth by Tiberius Constantine,[48] while at the same time referencing the border struggles (with Chosroes)[49] and court intrigues surrounding Byzantine succession.[50] In between references to various other late antique and early medieval dynasties,[51] Pound depicts a Europe beset

[44] C. Bizzini describes this utopia as a 'linguistic city [that] grows in fragments and reveals itself as an unending work in progress: literature at this point becomes utopia and the writer an utopist, always in quest of what cannot, and by that very fact, must not be settled or become permanent', see 'The Utopian City in the Cantos of Ezra Pound', *Utopian Studies* 15.1 (2004), 30–43, at 42.

[45] J. Sullivan, *Ezra Pound* (Baltimore, 1970), 279.

[46] 'Pound's first contention is that any political organization, any government, has as its primary task the responsibility for economic prosperity', E. Davis, *Vision Fugitive: Ezra Pound and Economics* (Lawrence, 1968), 70. For a more thorough analysis of the development of economic theory in the *Cantos*, see Davis, *Vision Fugitive*, 69–94.

[47] E. Pound, *Thrones 96–109 de los cantares* (New York, 1959), 3.

[48] 'A Byzantine emperor, 571–577. Directed by the divine, he discovered a great treasure of gold buried under slabs of the palace: "and the gold was distributed among the poor"', C. Terrell, *A Companion to the Cantos of Ezra Pound* (Berkeley, 1984), 592.

[49] Terrrell, *Companion to the Cantos*, 592.

[50] Terrell, *Companion to the Cantos*, 592.

[51] Pound's Byzantine history is interwoven with the history of the Lombards, for example, as well as the ancestry of Charlemagne, Diocletian, Mussolini's funeral (Terrell, *Companion to the Cantos*, 595), and the philosophers Philostratus and Apollonius of Tyana. This type of pastiche and collage regarding Byzantium finds its architectural parallel in, for example, the Byzantine pavilion at the Crystal Palace in London, which stood for most of the second half of the nineteenth century. *Black's Guide to London*, for instance, describes it as follows: 'Let us now enter the Byzantine court by the middle of the three arches which communicate with the north transept, and turning to the right pass along the copy of a

by intrigue, religious persecution and civil war. Regarding Byzantium, this is embodied in the figures of Eirene and her ambassador Constans, mentioned in the next line (66),[52] and their inability to seal a marriage with the Frankish king Charlemagne.[53] This is contrasted with the relatively detailed recounting of Justinian's reign and his depiction as a model for proper economic civic administration: '"called Bosphorus from the bull tax" / treaty with Lombards under Justinian, / Goths out of Verona et Brixia'.[54] The reference to Justinian's taxation policy, treaties and military successes are followed by the adulatory and emphatic line, 'all italian reip. under law'.[55]

Having established Justinian as an exemplary ruler in foreign affairs, Pound continues his analysis of his rule by describing Justinian's propriety regarding internal affairs, particularly in economics. Davis describes Pound's two-fold belief about monetary policy: that government should offer 'effective encouragement for the producer, complete hindrance for the manipulator of credit' and that monetary value 'must be based on something which guarantees its worth – popular confidence, backing by royal decree or government direction'.[56] These principles are exemplified by Justinian's rule: 'Some sort of embargo, Theodora died in the 19th Justinian / And the money sellers Ablavius

cloister, the original of which is at Cologne. The roof is decorated with Byzantine ornament imitation of glass mosaic work. In the middle of the court is a copy of a fountain from a convent on the Rhine. Notice the Prior's doorway from Ely, in a late Norman style; the curious Norman doorway with zigzag moulding from Kilpeck Church, Herefordshire; the doorway from Mayence Cathedral – the bronze doors within being from Augsburg cathedral – the effigies, near the fountain, of Henry II and his queen Eleanor; Richard I and his wife Berengaria; John, and his wife Isabella, all from ancient originals. There are many other copies of architectural subjects in this court and the adjoining vestibules which deserve attention', A. Black and C. Black, *Black's Guide to London and Its Environs* (London, 1870), 334. The Byzantine pavilion itself, then, was not purely Byzantine but rather, like Pound's *Cantos*, a strange amalgamation, a collage, of (architectural) features from all over Europe.

[52] For the history of this event, see Terrell, *Companion to the Cantos*, 596.

[53] Terrell further emphasises the improper civic administration of Byzantium and the destructive political intrigue during this time: 'Eirene neglected the wars on all fronts and devoted much energy to religious problems. A military revolt forced her to retire from the regency in 790, but she was recalled by Constantine in 792 and made joint ruler. She encouraged his misconduct and cruelty, ordered him to be blinded, and got him deposed in 797. She was, in turn, deposed in 797 [*sic*, as actually she was deposed in 802]', see Terrell, *Companion to the Cantos*, 596.

[54] Pound, *Thrones 96–109 de los cantares*, 6.

[55] Pound, *Thrones 96–109 de los cantares*, 6; 'and he brought all Italy back to the laws of the republic', see Terrell, *Companion to the Cantos*, 597.

[56] Davis, *Vision Fugitive*, 79.

and Marcellus / thought they would bump off Justinian'.[57] Terrell comments that Justinian 'established embargoes to protect local businesses' and thwarted the attempts of Ablavius and Marcellus to tamper with the money supply.[58] Pound's focus on Byzantine economics reaches its apotheosis in the long summary of *The Book of the Eparch*, '[t]he great legal document uttered by Leo the Wise, 866–912, to provide some measure of justice in the marketplace', the analysis of which concludes canto 96.[59]

Cookson notes that the Byzantium in Canto 96 is, 'in Pound's paradise, a sort of map for the possibility of an ideal city'.[60] As such, it is fitting that Pound explicitly refers to his friends Wyndham Lewis and W. B. Yeats, for the former of whom Byzantium was a star, both a distant utopia and, more immediately for Pound (and Yeats), the means by which sailors, such as the narrating Odysseus of *The Cantos* and the narrator of 'Sailing to Byzantium', find their way home: '"Constantinople" said Wyndham "our star", / Mr. Yeats called it Byzantium.'[61]

As in Pound, Yeats's Byzantium is an idealised city, but unlike Pound, Yeats's concern is not with the earthly but with the spiritual city Byzantium comes to symbolise in his poems 'Sailing to Byzantium' and 'Byzantium'.[62] In a famous and oft-cited interview, the poet commented about Byzantium, 'I symbolize the search for the spiritual life by a journey to that city'.[63] As one

[57] Pound, *Thrones 96–109 de los cantares*, 6. Pound would later attribute Byzantium's fall to its loss of control over its own currency: 'The base, shall we say, and the slide of Byzantium, / bags, baskets full of, presumably, coinage, and lured twenty thousand sclavons' (10). For a gloss on this line, see Terrell, *Companion to the Cantos*, 603.

[58] Terrell, *Companion to the Cantos*, 596: Justinian and Theodora's mutually beneficial power sharing (and her peaceful death in this canto), moreover, stands in contrast to that of the scheming and mutually destructive relationship of Eirene and Constans earlier in the canto.

[59] Terrell, *Companion to the Cantos*, 607. For a fuller discussion of *The Book of the Eparch*, see W. Cookson, *A Guide to the Cantos of Ezra Pound* (London, 1985), 122; for the significance of books in *The Cantos* more generally, see A. Kappel, 'The Reading and Writing of a Modern *Paradiso*: Ezra Pound and the Books of Paradise', *Twentieth Century Literature* 27.3 (Autumn, 1981), 223–46, esp. 228.

[60] Cookson, *Guide to the Cantos of Ezra Pound*, 123.

[61] Pound, *Thrones 96–109 de los cantares*, 13.

[62] Though Pound started his *Cantos* as early as 1915, the first section came out in 1924, while *Thrones*, the section on Byzantine history, did not appear until 1959. Yeats's 'Sailing to Byzantium' (1926) and 'Byzantium' (1930) were thus written before *Thrones* but after the start of *The Cantos* (for the dates of the Yeats's poem, see Jeffares, 'Byzantine Poems', 44; for the development of the drafts into their final published form, see C. Bradford, 'Yeats's Byzantium Poems: A Study of Their Development', *PMLA* 75.1 (Mar., 1960), 110–25.

[63] See M. O'Neill, *A Routledge Literary Sourcebook on the Poems of W.B. Yeats* (London, 2004), 137; R. Murphy, *The Meaning of Byzantium in the Poetry and Prose of W.B. Yeats* (New

of the most important poems in English by one of the most famous poets in English, 'Sailing to Byzantium' (and, to a lesser degree, 'Byzantium') has received significant scholarly attention: as an exemplar of Yeats's symbolism[64] and decadence,[65] and even more so as a spiritual utopia.[66] The significance of Yeats's poems for the current chapter is how they fit into the larger tradition of Modernist poetry about Byzantium, particularly in its exemplification of the aesthetic principles of Hulme and Wilde.

In an inversion of the Decadent idea of Byzantium, it is not Byzantium that is in a state of decay, but the current world: 'That is no country for old men', Yeats writes, meaning Byzantium. Here, however, is just such a country; the poet describes the birds as 'those dying generations' and all life as that which is 'begotten, born, and dies'.[67] The closing lines of the first stanza, 'neglect / Monuments of unageing intellect',[68] evoke Eliot's own reference to the crumbling Byzantine statue in Ravenna in 'Lune de Miel' and the 'monumental stability and permanence' that Hulme saw in Byzantine art.

Yeats's Byzantium models Hulme's and Wilde's rejection of realism in favour of artifice and stylisation. The birds who die in the first stanza of 'Sailing to Byzantium', for example, are called 'those dying generations'; once 'gathered into the artifice of eternity' at the end of the third stanza, the birds take 'such a form as Grecian goldsmiths make [...] set upon a golden bough to sing'.[69] Yeats here embraces the artificiality and non-mimetic nature of Byzantine

York, 2004), 145; and P. Edwards, *Pilgrimage and Literary Tradition* (Cambridge, 2005), 4 as just a few of the many citations on this topic.

[64] See C. Empson, 'Yeats and Byzantium', *Grand Street* 1.4 (Summer, 1982), 67–95, esp. 67, 70 and 90; J. Ransom, 'Yeats and his Symbolism', *The Kenyon Review* 1.3 (Summer, 1939), 309–22; and, for a general reading of Yeats's symbolism beyond the Byzantium poems, A. Bate, 'Yeats and the Symbolist Aesthetic', *Modern Language Notes* 98.5 (Dec., 1983), 1214–33.

[65] See McAlindon, 'The Idea of Byzantium'.

[66] The references are too many to list, but, for example, Bradford calls Byzantium Yeats's 'golden city of imagination' in Bradford, 'Yeats's Byzantium Poems', 110. See also Campbell, 'Yeats's "Sailing to Byzantium"', *Modern Language Notes* 70.8 (Dec., 1955), 585–9; for book-length treatments, see Murphy, *The Meaning of Byzantium in the Poetry and Prose of W. B. Yeats*.

[67] W. Yeats, *Collected Poems of W. B. Yeats* (New York, 1965), 191.

[68] Yeats, *Collected Poems of W. B. Yeats*, 191.

[69] Yeats, *Collected Poems of W. B. Yeats*, 192. In 'Byzantium', the artificial golden birds appear again: 'Miracle, bird or golden handiwork, / More miracle than bird or handiwork, / Planted on the star-lit golden bough', Yeats, *Collected Poems of W. B. Yeats*, 243. For an expanded analysis of the golden birds and their historical source, as well as Yeats's viewing of Byzantine mosaics in Palermo, see J. Notopoulos, 'Sailing to Byzantium', *The Classical Journal* 41.2 (Nov., 1945), 78–9.

art, and even more so when he expresses his own with, 'Once out of nature I shall never take / My bodily form from any natural thing', but rather from the artificial form of the goldsmith's craft. Indeed, the repetition of gold, once in the penultimate stanza and clustered close four times in the ultimate stanza, suggests the tesserae of the Byzantine mosaic tradition, whose fragmentary and abstract nature influenced so many Modernists and which the poet himself referred to earlier in the poem as 'God's holy fire / As in the gold mosaic of a wall'.[70]

In terms of aesthetics and symbolism, then, Yeats's Byzantium falls within the larger tradition of Modernist writing about literature. Symbolically, Byzantium remains a distant (highly ordered spiritual) utopia. Aesthetically, Yeats's Byzantine poems suggest the non-mimetic abstraction, permanence and fragmentation that Modernists saw in Byzantine art generally and mosaics in particular.

While Yeats's Byzantium as spiritual utopia has been the subject of much scholarly literature, much less has been written on the neglected Modernist poet Charles Williams, dismissed as 'a Christian fantasist'[71] whom 'critics have done little to contextualize [...] within the tumultuous period of the mid-twentieth century, ignoring his connections to high modernism and treating him as a minor writer of fantasy fiction'.[72] Williams's Arthurian poetic cycle, consisting of the volumes *Taliessin through Logres* (1938), *The Region of the Summer Stars* (1944) and *Arthurian Torso* (posthumously published in 1948), offers a portrait of a Modernist poet whose vision of Byzantium and the aesthetic presentation of that vision suggest deep resonances between his work and those of his more famous Modernist peers. Indeed, as Yeats's

[70] Yeats, *Collected Poems of W. B. Yeats*, 191. The Byzantium scholar Jonathan Shepard reported at the 'Wanted: Byzantium' conference in Stockholm on 28 October 2011 a story told to him in the early 1970s by the great Byzantinist Steven Runciman. As Shepard tells the story, Runciman was at a dinner party that he knew beforehand Yeats would also attend. Having waited for a lull in the general conversation, the young Runciman arose and boldly addressed the old poet with a carefully prepared question: 'Mr. Yeats,' he asked, 'but why must you put so much gold in your poems?' To this the old poet replied: 'Because there is gold in everything beautiful, and everything beautiful is in gold'.

[71] A. Marshall, 'Reframing Charles Williams: Modernist Doubt and the Crisis of World War in "All Hallows Eve"', *Journal of Modern Literature* (30.2), 64–85, at 66. For her analysis of his connection to Modernism, see 80. Lewis also notes that the essential opacity and aesthetic difficulty of Williams's work merits his inclusion into the Modernist canon, C. Williams and C. Lewis, *Taliessin Through Logres, The Region of the Summer Stars, Arthurian Torso* (Grand Rapids, 1974), 31.

[72] Marshall, 'Reframing Charles Williams', 64.

publication of 'Sailing to Byzantium' in his collection *October Blast* suggests Wyndham Lewis's Constantinople in his own journal *Blast*, so too does Williams's identification of Byzantium as 'The Region of the Summer Stars' evoke Lewis's depiction of Constantinople as 'Our Star'. One critic makes the parallels explicit, suggesting, 'Williams, like Yeats, was inspired by the image of Byzantium as the eternal city within which the divine rule is dramatized on a spectacular stage, but the two sail to Byzantium for different reasons'.[73]

In Williams's Arthurian cycle, the central figure is Arthur's court poet, Taliessin, who is entrusted with the mission of going to Byzantium to bring back to Arthur's Britain a blueprint for a properly ordered city (and empire), 'the organic body', as Williams calls it.[74] In this, his journey echoes the journeys of Yeats's narrator and Eliot's travelling honeymooners and combines the economic and political Byzantine utopia of Pound's *Cantos* with Yeats's spiritual one to offer imbue Byzantium with a new symbolism, as Lewis notes: 'Such is Byzantium – Order, envisaged not as restraint or even as a convenience but as a beauty and splendour'.[75]

Williams's theology prized geometrical order: 'Hell is inaccurate' and 'God always geometrizes', the poet believed, perhaps unconsciously echoing Hulme.[76] For Williams, geometry has a more than aesthetic power: it is through this order that the divine is understood. Indeed, Williams's fellow Inkling C. S. Lewis describes his friend's Byzantium symbolism as follows:

> The throne-room of the Emperor of Byzantium [...] typifies the presence of God. [...] It is the central unity: all creation is simply an expression of infinitely varied forms of that one basic reality – "The streets repeat the sound of the throne". In order that we finite beings may apprehend the Emperor He translates His glory into multiple forms.[77]

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[73] J. Curtis, 'Byzantium and the Matter of Britain: The Narrative Framework of Charles Williams's Later Arthurian Poems', *Quondam et Futuris* 2.1 (Spring, 1992), 28–54, at 44.

[74] See the poem entitled 'The Vision of Empire' for the description of Byzantium: Williams and Lewis, *Taliessin Through Logres*, 24.

[75] Williams and Lewis, *Taliessin Through Logres*, 289. Structurally, too, the poem exemplifies the Modernist interest in fragmentation: the poems in Williams's cycle 'are not presented as a continuous narrative but, like the earliest sources of Arthurian legend, by means of incidents whose sequence and interconnections are not spelled out', M. Shideler, *Charles Williams: A Critical Essay* (Grand Rapids, 1966), 20. Though Shideler attributes the fragmentary nature of the poems to their imitation of old Arthurian sources, this structure also puts them in the Modernist tradition of fragmentary poems illustrated by Pound's *Cantos*.

[76] Williams and Lewis, *Taliessin Through Logres*, 290.

[77] Williams and Lewis, *Taliessin Through Logres*, 291.

In the poem 'Taliessin in the School of the Poets', Williams elaborates on the patterned orderliness of Byzantium. He enters the school of poets by crossing a mosaic of Apollo around which Taliessin notes 'the weighed gold of butterflies' wings'.[78] Here, Williams invokes again the importance of gold and mosaics to the aesthetics of poetry. Looking more closely at the image of the god, Taliessin notes the symmetry of the body: he 'reckoned the rondures of the base / by the absolute symmetry of the spine'.[79] Taliessin then describes the rest of the room:

> From the indulged Byzantine [because of the mosaics] floor / between right and left newel / floats the magnanimous path of the stair / to a tangle of compensations, / every joint a centre, / and every centre a jewel. / [...] / The darkened glamour of the golden-work / took colour from each line; / dimly the gazing postulants saw / patterns of multilinear red / sprinkled and spreading everywhere, / and spaced to one design.[80]

Williams's description again shows the geometrical patterning of the mosaic and, like Yeats, features the goldsmiths, though this time crafting butterflies instead of birds. The description concludes with an invocation of the universal geometrical symbolism of the Byzantine mosaic: 'In the broad Phoeban ground / they saw the microcosm drawn; / they heard the universal sigh'.[81]

The description of the room, however, is but a prelude to the description of the throne, which is to the room as the Byzantine Emperor is to the world: the symbol of God, which everything else resembles – 'Infinite patterns opened / in the sovereign chair's mass; / but the crowned form of an anatomized man, / bones, nerves, sinews, / the diagram of the style of the Logos, / rose in the crimson brass'.[82] The universe appears in the shape of a man. But this is not a real man; following the modernist aesthetic, indeed, following Yeats's own desire to be put in a stylised crafted body after his own death, this one is crafted from brass. C. S. Lewis notes that Williams 'constructs the body as if it were a geometrical diagram'[83] and, moreover, 'it is an ideal geometry'[84] in which 'at the Centre, all things that here are remote and diverse from one another, and

78 Williams and Lewis, *Taliessin Through Logres*, 46.
79 Williams and Lewis, *Taliessin Through Logres*, 46.
80 Williams and Lewis, *Taliessin Through Logres*, 47.
81 Williams and Lewis, *Taliessin Through Logres*, 48.
82 Williams and Lewis, *Taliessin Through Logres*, 48.
83 Williams and Lewis, *Taliessin Through Logres*, 303.
84 Williams and Lewis, *Taliessin Through Logres*, 303.

all in infinite strength, come together. [...] Everything turns out to be equally central when we see it in the full light of the Unity'.[85]

In studying the poets' room in Camelot, Taliessin sees an artificial construction of the actual world he will see when he arrives in Byzantium. About this room, Mary McDermott Shideler writes:

> When he reaches Byzantium, he finds it a place where "the streets repeat the sound of the Throne". Here history and eternity, nature and supernatural grace, are integrated. It is a closely structured and finely ordered society, its citizens as diverse in structure and function as the parts of the human body, yet as precisely coordinated as a geometrical diagram.[86]

Shideler's analysis hits on the major themes of Byzantium imagery in Modernist poetry. Anticipating Pound by several years, Williams notes the symbolic significance of the throne as the organising principle for government; emulating Yeats, Williams's Byzantium is an eternal city out of time, containing both 'history and eternity'; and, following Hulme, it has a 'geometric' perfection. Williams, C. S. Lewis writes, 'chooses the Byzantine [empire over the Roman] because, whether rightly or wrongly, we think of it as something more rigid, more stylized, more scrupulously hierarchical, more stiffly patterned than the Roman. Its organization suggests something geometrical'.[87]

It is something of a great irony that Williams and Marinetti, who were opposites in virtually every other respect – politically, theologically, aesthetically – held in common a belief in the significance of geometrical ordering. Even as Marinetti celebrates, in *Geometrical and Mechanical Splendor and Sensitivity toward Numbers*, the 'ABOLISHING [of] THE AGE-OLD VALUES (romantic, sentimental, and Christian) OF NARRATIVE', the very things Williams lauded in his own poetry,[88] he proclaims that out of the death of Symbolism, Decadence and Romanticism, 'a new beauty is born this day, which we Futurists will substitute for what went before and which I name GEOMETRICAL AND MECHANICAL SPLENDOR'; among 'its

[85] Williams and Lewis, *Taliessin Through Logres*, 304.

[86] Williams and Lewis, *Taliessin Through Logres*, 9.

[87] Williams and Lewis, *Taliessin Through Logres*, 290.

[88] Indeed, Marinetti continues this sentence, 'by virtue of which the importance of a wound, sustained in battle, was greatly exaggerated in comparison with the weapons of destruction', *Critical Writings*, 137. In this, too, he differs from Williams, who focused intensely on 'the dolorous blow', the wound that killed King Arthur.

essential characteristics' is 'a feeling for the great city'.[89] It is, ultimately, this feeling, and the myriad ways in which that feeling could be expressed, that binds the disparate strains of writing and thinking about Byzantium and that continually draws writers, like idealists looking to re-create a lost utopia in their own image, back to 'Constantinople Our Star'.

[89] Marinetti, *Critical Writings*, 135.

Byzantine Receptions: An Afterword

Paul Stephenson[1]

The editors of this collection have elected to arrange papers thematically, eschewing chronology. The first and last chapters are confidently international. H. Bodin's important chapter considers competing Byzantinisms, the constructions of Byzantium, across time and space, her analysis defying reduction as surely as the notions she investigates. Bodin introduces us to the valuable notion of 'Western and Byzantine semiospheres', distinct cultural zones with definite cultural centres: Paris and Constantinople. If the methodological framework she erects is sophisticated, the basic division she posits between East and West, inside and outside, theirs and ours, is familiar. A. Goldwyn's chapter pursues one of these Byzantinisms, a Modernist poetic interpretation of Byzantium, from Gallipoli in 1915 and the pages of an English poetry review into *fin-de-siècle* Paris – in Bodin's view, undoubtedly the 'cultural centre of the Western semiosphere' – flirting with Futurists and Symbolists but lingering with the Anglophone Modernists in their lost Utopia, geometric and adorned with mosaics.

In these chapters and throughout the volume we learn how Byzantium has been received by cosmopolitan Europeans, who saw in it a compelling aesthetic, a decadence or eroticism, a profound spirituality, or a divinely ordered monarchical model, all worthy of emulation or provoking repulsion. However, the overwhelming impression left on the reader of this collection is the importance of nationality in interpreting Byzantium. It is remarkable but not surprising that the Roman Empire in the East, the Byzantine Empire, which encompassed or encroached upon the lands of so many nations, from Italy in the West across East-Central and Southeastern Europe, through Turkey and the Caucasus to southern Russia and Ukraine, has been scrutinized so differently in many national scholarly traditions. Very few of those traditions have, to date, been considered carefully, largely because the reception of Byzantium and the emergence of Byzantine Studies are subjects only now

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being embraced by scholars. The exception is the role of Byzantium in modern Greece and Modern Greek, which has a substantial literature generated both within and outside of Greece. Bodin contributes to this in her reflection on Cafavy, but traverses semiospheres even as she looks with the poet from Alexandria at the interior of a church, and reflects with him and his translators on 'our glorious Byzantinism'.

The editors remind us in their introduction that, as with so much in Byzantine Studies, the florescence of reception studies has followed a path forged by scholars of antiquity and the western European Middle Ages. Several chapters in this book, notably those addressing the reception and study of Byzantium in France, Britain and German lands (in other words, the core of Bodin's 'Western semiosphere'), show how the reception of Byzantium was entwined with the receptions of antiquity and the Latin Middle Ages. The chapters presented here advance several established arguments considerably and open new avenues. In an elegant series of reflections on a twelfth-century Byzantine novel in eighteenth-century France, I. Nilsson shows that Byzantine literature was well known long before it was 'discovered' in the nineteenth century, demonstrating how Makrembolites' *Hysmine and Hysminias* appealed to its French interpreters' concerns with reason, sentiment and the body. Already those immersed in the seventeenth-century *Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes* had grouped together the Greek novels of antiquity and the Middle Ages, placing beside each other works by the celebrated Heliodoros and Makrembolites. *Hysmine and Hysminias*, which existed in three separate French translations by 1625, had been inspired by Achilles Tatius' *Leucippe and Clitophon*, yet its classicism proved insufficient for eighteenth-century tastes. When a fourth French translation was published in 1729, and in eleven more editions before the end of the century, it contained numerous emendations and interpolations, for example the appearance of eight sculpture groups in bronze depicting Graeco-Roman mythological scenes and characters. The garden where the lovers meet is shorn of Asiatic adornment, its elaborate fountain replaced with a rustic spring, better suited to perceptions of the ancient Greek landscape. In her fascinating study of fictile ivories – casts of ivories produced for collectors – H. Rufus-Ward taps a similar vein, observing that Byzantine ivory carving was appreciated by most nineteenth-century English aesthetes and connoisseurs only when it was mistaken for classical art (the Asclepius and Hygieia diptych) or was perceived as a Byzantine attempt at reviving classical style (the St John the Baptist panel), in contrast to 'the elaborate seat, and rich embroideries of the Consular robes, the footstool and the chair cushion' of the Clementinus diptych, in which were 'recognised that tendency to florid

ornamentation, which formed the basis of the style subsequently famous as Byzantine'.

A. Berger's paper highlights the impact of impressionable individuals, keen tourists to the Mediterranean who also happened to be monarchs, on the emergence of a Byzantinizing architectural style in German lands. If Ludwig I of Bavaria was inspired principally by his visits to Sicily and could be persuaded by his architect, Leon von Klenze, to accept a design with little in common with Palermo's palatine chapel, Ludwig II's pursuit of a Byzantine stage for his majesty was more scholastic. Among his papers in the Secret House Archives of Bavaria are handwritten translations from Constantine VII's *Book of Ceremonies*, to be associated with aborted plans to construct Linderhof Castle as a Byzantine palace, with its own *Basilica*, *Sigma*, *Onopus* and *Consistorium*. In fact, only a *Chrysotriklinos* was ever built, and that was at Neuschwanstein, Ludwig II's faux-medieval castle with a Byzantine golden throne-room named the 'Hall of the Holy Grail', representative of the monarch's 'retreat into a political and religious fantasy world'.

Like the Anglophone Modernists, Ludwig I coveted Byzantine mosaics. He desired them for his Allerheiligen-Hofkirche in Munich, but baulked at the expense of their production and installation. In contrast, as T. H. Sørensen notes, by the 1890s a far less expensive process for manufacturing mosaics had been devised, and elaborate Neo-Byzantine mosaics dominated the interior of the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche in Berlin. Its patron, Wilhelm II, who built it to honour the memory of his grandfather Wilhelm I, embraced the notion of his divine right to rule as fully as had the Ludwigs, and like them he found compelling the model of rulership and divine order projected by Byzantine emperors. As ever, this was a particular vision of Byzantium, tempered by classicism – Wilhelm's mother and wife both bore the name Augusta – and medievalism. The church, according to Wilhelm's chamberlain Mirbach, was in the 'late Germanic, the so-called transitional style', whose origins could be 'traced back to the early Christian and Byzantine architecture', epitomized by the buildings of Theodoric, which had, in turn, inspired Charlemagne. The mosaic that adorned this structure also echoed Ravenna, with the pious parade formed by members of the Hohenzollern family evoking the processional mosaics of Justinian and Theodora at San Vitale and of the martyrs at Sant'Apollinare Nuovo. Whereas Ludwig was inspired mostly by his own travels, Wilhelm II had access to photographs, which transformed engagement with the remains of antiquity and the Middle Ages. Goldwyn has reminded us that it was in Paris at the 1900 Exposition Universelle that 'a mass European public delighted in the first photographic display of Byzantine monuments'.

As D. R. Reinsch explores in his chapter devoted to Hieronymus Wolf, the German fascination with Byzantium began with an attempt to establish the full run of Byzantine history. Wolf's editions of Zonaras and Niketas Choniates, when supplemented by the first editions of Gregoras and Chalcocondyles, presented a narrative from Constantine I to Constantine XI. The early approach to editing and translating whole texts can be criticized, but must also be praised, and it stands in stark contrast to the later efforts by various national historical schools to construct narratives from snippets and gobbets excised and stitched together. These great works of compilation are not unique to post-Byzantine lands, but they might surely be studied (and as yet have not been studied) to gauge responses to Byzantium in, for example, Bulgaria and former Yugoslavia (ostensibly within the 'Byzantine semiosphere').

As L. Havlíková establishes in her case study of the Czech and Moravian lands (neither in the 'Western' nor the 'Byzantine semiosphere'), a corollary of this nationalist perspective in source collations is the inclusion of Byzantine motifs in historical novels only when these had direct bearing on the homelands, for example in Eduard Štorch's *O Děvín a Velehrad* (1939). Written for children, it portrayed the struggle between Greek East and Latin West for influence in Great Moravia in a manner that evokes novels produced by Penelope Delta to evoke national feeling in Greek schoolchildren a generation earlier. In Delta's works, the protagonists stand in for those engaged in the contemporary struggle for Macedonia. The most important novelty of the present collection is the number of interventions in English by scholars based in or trained in Slavic countries reflecting upon national responses to Byzantium. Scholars from the Czech Republic and Poland, Russia and Bulgaria, offer perspectives on the potency of Byzantium in their national traditions, understood generally to have resisted or embraced influence from the Orthodox empire. Their chapters expose the weakness of simplistic definitions and false notions, of a monolithic Byzantium and the nature and permeability of cultural, religious and semiotic borders – as Bodin reminds us, 'boundaries of semiospheres [...] function [...] as filtering membranes, transforming external phenomena into internal ones' – and highlight the quicksilver quality of Byzantium.

Local and national politics loomed large, as P. Marciniak illustrates in his study on the interpretation in Polish literature of Byzantium, which stood for Russia, the imperialist enemy. And yet, S. Ivanov shows, Byzantium was not regarded positively in Russia for much of the period after 1453, and it was only embraced universally when 'the conquest of the Straits [...] and the

erection of a cross over St Sophia [became the] goals of Russian foreign policy'. At the same time, not coincidentally, Byzantine Studies became 'one of the pillars of the Russian humanities'. Byzantium, or rather some Russian notions of Byzantium – one recalls Bodin's reflections on Konstantin Leontiev's conservative, orthodox, bureaucratic, autocratic, above all imperial Russian Byzantium – fell victim to the Bolshevik revolution to be revived as part of Stalin's imperial renaissance, and again as part of a spiritual reawakening in the 1960s, and once more today as a morality tale for those who would trust perfidious Westerners. Leontiev's Byzantium lives on. In a complementary manner, V. Vachkova shows that the birthplace of Helena, mother of Constantine the Great, was a profoundly politicized matter for the earliest national historians of Bulgaria. Yet it was a Venetian who accepted categorically the convincing evidence that this was Sofia, quondam Sardica, whereas the leading Bulgarian church historian of the seventeenth century, Petar Bogdan, and the acknowledged father of Bulgarian national history in the eighteenth century, Paisius of Hilendar, both neglected this matter for different reasons. According to Vachkova, 'In the nineteenth century [...] Helena [...] "fell victim" to the idea of the Bulgarian Church gaining independence', even as in the twentieth she suffered *damnatio memoriae* under Communism.

Coverage in the volume is, therefore, unique to date in embracing areas neglected in the few earlier studies concerned with Byzantine receptions, stepping between the 'Western' and 'Byzantine' semiospheres. Still, of course, there are areas that are neglected or ignored entirely, notably former Yugoslavia, now both partly within and without the European Union as it was inside and outside of Byzantium. A companion volume could travel south through the southern Slavic periphery of the Byzantine semiosphere, through Slovenia and Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia, alighting at the remarkable renovations of central Skopje, where Justinian now looms large. Reinsch identifies K. Krumbacher as the father of German Byzantinology. Krumbacher was appointed in 1892 to the newly established chair in Byzantinistik at Munich. He promptly set up the Institute for Byzantine Studies, and founded the journal *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*. One might also consider Krumbacher the father of southern Slavic Byzantinology, since he trained a generation including Stanoje Stanojević, Vladimir Ćorović, Jovan Radonić, Nikola Radojčić, Dragutin Anastasijević, Božidar Prokić and Filaret Granić. Belgrade also gave Byzantine Studies a Russian-born scholar, who fled to Finland and was trained in Heidelberg and Paris: George Ostrogorsky.

The academic study of Byzantine texts and history must be considered an essential corollary to the developments outlined in all the chapters in this

volume, which might be drawn out more fully, as it is by Ivanov on Russia. In planning his aborted Byzantine palace, Ludwig II, Berger reminds us, had access to an edition and Latin translation of the *De cerimoniis*. We know from Reinsch that this was the result of a project commenced three centuries earlier, in Augsburg, which led in time to corpora of Byzantine Greek texts. The first corpus, the *Byzantine du Louvre* (or *Corpus Parisiense*) was edited under the auspices of Louis XIV from 1645 to 1688, and manuscripts flowed into the Royal Library in Paris. This must be regarded as essential background to the situation discussed by Nilsson.

Linking the development of academic studies in Byzantium more closely to the receptions of Byzantium, or Byzantinisms, outside the academy is a desideratum. One would also wish to learn more about non-Slavic lands, including Romania, Hungary and Albania, or indeed Italy and Turkey. To that end, I conclude by offering some preliminary reflections on the academic study of Byzantium in Romania (very briefly) and Turkey (at greater length, but with a diversion to the USA). The study of Byzantium in Romania is founded on the efforts of a few individuals, who, like K. Krumbacher in Germany or F. Chalandon in France, inspired and patronized, provoked and cajoled others. Most prolific among Romanian Byzantinists, and perhaps among all Byzantinists living and dead, was N. Iorga, who authored or edited over 1,300 books and wrote some 10,000 articles, mostly relating to Romanian national history. Within that category we must include his many works on 'Romanité', and therefore also his *Byzance et la continuité byzantine après Byzance*, commonly reduced by those who know of him but have not read his work to 'Iorga's *Byzance après Byzance*'. I say he wrote, but perhaps I should indicate that many of his works were dictated during interminable train rides while engaged on his full-time job as, variously, parliamentarian, Minister of Education and Minister President of the Council of Ministers (appointed by his former pupil King Carol). We may wish to distinguish between his roles as politician and historian, but at the time the two were intertwined and complementary. Iorga participated in the Paris peace conferences after the First World War in both capacities, that is to say both as politician and historian. This was not exceptional: the Harvard medievalist Charles Homer Haskins represented American interests.

A significant number of Iorga's works, most famously his *Byzance après Byzance*, were translated into French, in part due to his desire to have his ideas recognized and ratified by an international audience, frequently in competition with other national historians. Iorga engaged in vociferous debates with his Bulgarian counterparts V. Zlatarski and P. Mutafchiev, who were certainly not

always in agreement themselves. In one address to the Romanian Academy of Sciences (of which he was, inevitably, President), when discussing the discovery of Byzantine lead seals on the banks of the Danube, and therefore, in his opinion, material evidence for his claims to 'Roman' continuity in the face of Bulgarian opposition, Iorga condemned his Bulgarian contemporaries for hiding their false claims from the rest of the world by publishing mostly in Bulgarian. Iorga was assassinated by political opponents (not irate academics with inferior publication records) on 27 November 1940. Several of the subsequent publications on Byzantine history by his pupil N. Banescu are dedicated to his memory.

Turkey is a still more fascinating zone of engagement, since there is no Turkish Iorga, no Krumbacher or Chalandon. Moreover, the study of Byzantium and its place in the national history of the modern nation, Türkiye, is a live issue. The valorization of the Ottoman past, notably the conquest of Constantinople and the earliest Ottoman centuries, has been a feature of the Erdoğan regime. In summer 2013, Taksim was the scene of riots when a park was to be replaced by a shopping centre incorporating a pastiche of an Ottoman-era barracks. There has in recent years emerged a 1453 industry, with the construction of a 1453 museum, and, as the editors note, the recent film *Fetih*. A medieval historian cannot here, and perhaps should not yet, engage directly with such a fluid and politically volatile scene, but it is surely worth highlighting the role Byzantium can and had played as a realm of engagement between Turkey and 'the West', which long predates Turkey's interest and possible entry into the European Union.

The engagement of western Byzantinists with earlier Turkish regimes, starting with Ataturk himself, was spearheaded by scholars and aesthetes based in the USA, where a broader interest in Byzantine art and culture accompanied the development of academic Byzantine Studies in the first half of the twentieth century. This owed something to the participation of American scholars in excavation and restoration projects in Byzantine lands, notably following the establishment of the Byzantine Institute of America by Thomas Whittemore. Whittemore, as is now widely known, negotiated with Ataturk to restore two of the finest surviving Byzantine churches in Istanbul, Hagia Sophia and the Chora (Kariye Camii). He sent home only drawings and films from his restorations, whereas earlier American excavations in the eastern Mediterranean, for example at Antioch – modern Antakya, which is now in Turkey but was then part of the French mandate of Syria – saw many museums and universities benefit from a remarkably generous policy of partage. The arrival of these precious mosaic floors had bolstered public interest in the

early Christian arts of the near east, even as it spurred academic interest in Byzantine Studies and facilitated the immigration of interpreters of Byzantine culture into the USA.[2] To summarize this emergence, which is comparatively very well studied, may appear to be a diversion from the issues at hand, but it is a fascinating case study that may inform further reflection, and in a volume devoted to the reception of Byzantium it may be excused.

The immigration in 1925 of Alexander A. Vasiliev to Madison, Wisconsin (before retiring to Dumbarton Oaks in 1944), of Kurt Weitzmann to Princeton in 1935, and of Ernst Kitzinger to Dumbarton Oaks in 1941 (moving in 1946 to Harvard), together galvanized the study of Byzantine history and art history in the USA. Vasiliev (1867–1953), aged 58 when he emigrated from St Petersburg, had already published his magnum opus, on Byzantium and the Arabs.[3] In Madison, where he taught for fifteen years, Vasiliev revised and translated his lectures, which were published in 1928–1929 as his two-volume *History of the Byzantine Empire*, began the translation of his first work into French, revised, translated and republished his work on Byzantium and the Arabs, and published a monograph on *The Goths in Crimea*.[4] Kurt Weitzmann (1904–1993), although still only 31 when he emigrated to the USA, had written or co-authored four books, being two volumes with his mentor Adolph Goldschmidt devoted to Byzantine ivory carving, and two books on manuscript illumination. His appointment at Princeton, as a permanent member of the Institute for Advanced Study, followed Weitzmann's refusal to join the Nazi party, which prevented his securing an academic appointment in Germany. Charles Rufus Morey was instrumental in Weitzmann's move to Princeton, and together with Albert Friend they began to prepare a corpus of illustrated manuscripts of the Septuagint. In 1945, Weitzmann succeeded Morey as chairman of Princeton's art history department, and in that role he supervised numerous doctoral projects. The meticulous study of objects and a devotion to the contexts of

[2] 'Byzantine art and scholarship in America', *American Journal of Archaeology* 51.4 (October–December 1947), 394–418.

[3] M. Anastos, 'Alexander A. Vasiliev, a personal sketch', *Russian Review* 13.1 (1954), 59–63; J. Barker, 'Vasiliev in Madison', in J. Barker, ed., *Pioneers of Byzantine Studies in America* (= *Byzantinische Forschungen* 27) (Amsterdam 2002), 242–63. Vasiliev became a US citizen in 1931.

[4] *A History of the Byzantine Empire* (Madison, WI, 1928–29; second edition 1952); *Byzance et les Arabes* (Brussels, 1935[1], 1950[2]); *The Goths in the Crimea* (Cambridge, MA, 1936). Two further monographs in English were published in the USA after his move to Dumbarton Oaks, namely *The Russian Attack on Constantinople in 860* (Cambridge, MA, 1946), and *Emperor Justin I* (Cambridge, MA, 1950).

their production had been instilled in Weitzmann by his training in Vienna and by Goldschmidt in Berlin. This training he passed to the generations of art historians in the USA, and with it raised the academic standing of what has hitherto seemed the domain of the private collector and dilettante.[5]

Ernst Kitzinger (1912–2003), who studied in Munich, left Germany in 1934 for reasons similar to Weitzmann, and arrived in the USA via Rome and London, where he was employed for five years at the British Museum.[6] During this time, Kitzinger was sent to Egypt for two months to study Coptic sculpture, and returned via Istanbul where he witnessed excavations of the palace floor mosaics and Whittemore's restorations at Hagia Sophia. Interned as an 'enemy alien' at the outbreak of the Second World War, Kitzinger was deported to Australia but swiftly released in 1941, when he spent a year at Dumbarton Oaks, and returned there for 22 years, from 1945, following his wartime service at the precursor to the CIA, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS).

Dumbarton Oaks, which was to become the leading research centre for Byzantine Studies, was established in 1940, when the estate in Georgetown, Washington, D.C., was conveyed by Robert Woods Bliss and Mildred Barnes Bliss to care of the Trustees for Harvard University. Discussions between the Blisses and Harvard had begun in 1932 and were conducted principally through the mediation of Edward W. Forbes, director of the Fogg Museum, and Paul J. Sachs, chairman of the Department of Fine Arts and associate director of the Fogg (from 1933). Formerly a classmate of Robert Bliss, Sachs was the scion of an investment banking house (he was the grandson of Goldman and son of Sachs). Together, Forbes and Sachs had worked since 1912 to develop the Fogg Museum at Harvard, and raised the funds for a new museum building, completed in 1925.[7] They were committed to the promotion of the study of early Christian and Byzantine art, and recognized the value of the remarkable collection the Blisses had assembled. In 1929–1930, the Blisses

[5] H. Kessler, 'Kurt Weitzmann, 1904–1993', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 47 (1993), xvii–xxiii; W. Loerke, 'Kurt Weitzmann, reflections on his student years', in Barker, ed., *Pioneers*, 276–83, extends only to 1935.

[6] K. Weitzmann, *Early Medieval Art at the British Museum* (London, 1940) is the enduring legacy of this period of his career, when Weitzmann was involved in the earliest studies of the Sutton Hoo excavation.

[7] See J. Cuno, 'Edward W. Forbes, Paul J. Sachs, and the origins of the Harvard University art museums', in E. Rosenthal (ed.), *Harvard's Art museums: 100 Years of Collecting* (Cambridge, MA, and New York, 1996). This is also discussed in passing in an elegant and revealing essay by D. H. Wright, 'Wilhelm Koehler and the original plan for research at Dumbarton Oaks', in Barker, ed., *Pioneers*, 134–75.

had donated a Coptic textile to the Fogg, and two years later they began to discuss with Sachs the possibility of donating their entire collection, along with their estate and its buildings, to Harvard, specifically to be administered by the directors of the Fogg. There was, however, some reluctance on the part of the Harvard Corporation to accept the donation on those terms unless the financial stability of the Fogg was assured, which they estimated would require a donation of one million dollars. The Blisses agreed to these terms in January 1937, and shortly afterwards, three years before the formal deed of conveyance, the acquisitions policy of the library at Dumbarton Oaks was organized to reflect institutional needs. From 1938, the Census of Byzantine Works of Art in American Collections was started. In 1940, the main house received a new museum wing. However, Dumbarton Oaks did not become an outpost of the Fogg Museum, as the Blisses had originally envisaged, and Sachs did not become its director. Rather, a protégé of Sachs, John Seymour Thacher, was despatched to Georgetown to become the first Director of Dumbarton Oaks, the position he held from 1940 to 1969.[8]

Thacher, like Sachs, was a wonderful raiser of funds, and was on very close terms with the Blisses, but the original research programme in Byzantine Studies at Dumbarton Oaks was conceived by Wilhelm Koehler, an art historian and another German immigrant, who was from 1933 a professor in Harvard's Department of Fine Arts. The initial cohort of junior fellows at Dumbarton Oaks, which Koehler set to work in 1941 on a collaborative project to survey the texts and monuments of Byzantine lands, included Kitzinger, Paul Alexander, Herbert Bloch and Milton Anastos.[9] Alexander and Bloch, like Kitzinger, were immigrants from Germany. Each morning the group devoted themselves to the collaborative project, and each afternoon to their private research projects. This policy was in place only for a couple of years, before war and the ousting of Koehler in 1943 intervened.[10] From 1945, Kitzinger was rejoined at Dumbarton Oaks by Anastos, also newly

[8] Cuno, 'Edward W. Forbes, Paul J. Sachs, and the origins of the Harvard University art museums', 25–7.

[9] J. Langdon, 'Milton Vasil Anastos, pioneer of Byzantine intellectual history in the United States', in Barker, ed., *Pioneers*, 20–60, at 35. Anastos remained at Dumbarton Oaks until his move to UCLA in 1964. His reflections on the activities at Dumbarton Oaks, which omits the earliest years, is M. Anastos, 'Dumbarton Oaks and Byzantine Studies, a personal account', in A. Laiou and H. Maguire, eds, *Byzantium, a World Civilization* (Washington, D.C., 1992), 5–18.

[10] Wright, 'Wilhelm Koehler', 155–60. The conception and implementation of the collaborative research project is described in W. Koehler, 'The Dumbarton Oaks program and the principle of collaborative research', *Speculum* 18.1 (1943), 118–23.

returned from the OSS, and additionally by Glanville Downey and Paul Underwood, in a small group of younger researchers. These were now overseen by Albert Friend, Weitzmann's colleague from Princeton, who was appointed as director of studies at Dumbarton Oaks, working alongside distinguished senior scholars such as Vasiliev and Sirarpie der Nersessian. In 1955, Kitzinger became director of studies at Dumbarton Oaks, the position he relinquished just before he became a professor at Harvard in 1967, where he taught until his retirement in 1979.[11] By then, Byzantine Studies were very well established in a number of important universities and at Dumbarton Oaks, and the study of Byzantine art in the USA was in the hands of several generations of scholars trained by Weitzmann and Kitzinger and by their former students.

The emigration of European scholars of Byzantium to the USA, and the development of Byzantine Studies that followed, appear to have little to do with the status of Byzantine Studies in Turkey. But on the contrary they offer both a comparison to the situation in contemporary Turkey and a model for the development of the subject that Turkey may wish to embrace. Notable historians, archaeologists, art historians, philologists and others have in recent years been recruited by Turkish institutions funded by wealthy patrons and generous foundations. Byzantine Studies is now taught in English to Turkish students enrolled at selective universities within programmes devoted broadly to the cultures and civilizations that thrived on the territory of modern Turkey. Foreign scholars based largely in Istanbul work alongside a cadre of committed Turks, teaching in both Turkish and English, many of them trained in the USA at the very institutions where Byzantine Studies were established by a similar process between 1925 and 1955, and several, perhaps most, now former fellows of Dumbarton Oaks. An opportunity exists for the first time for a genuine florescence in Byzantine Studies in the place where it is most easily and best studied on the ground, at the very heart of the former empire, its capital city, in Bodin's terms the 'cultural centre of the Byzantine semiosphere'. Byzantinists everywhere must hope that this will not be stifled by political considerations or perceptions having nothing to do with the Roman Empire in the East, Byzantium, and everything to do with Byzantinism, contempt for a decadent Christian Empire that was constructed in the centuries after it fell in the manner outlined in the foregoing chapters.

[11] Obituary by H. Maguire in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 57 (2003), ix–xiv; *Dictionary of Art Historians*, s.v. Kitzinger, Ernst: http://www.dictionaryofarthistorians.org/kitzingere.htm (last accessed 20 October 2014).

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Indices

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